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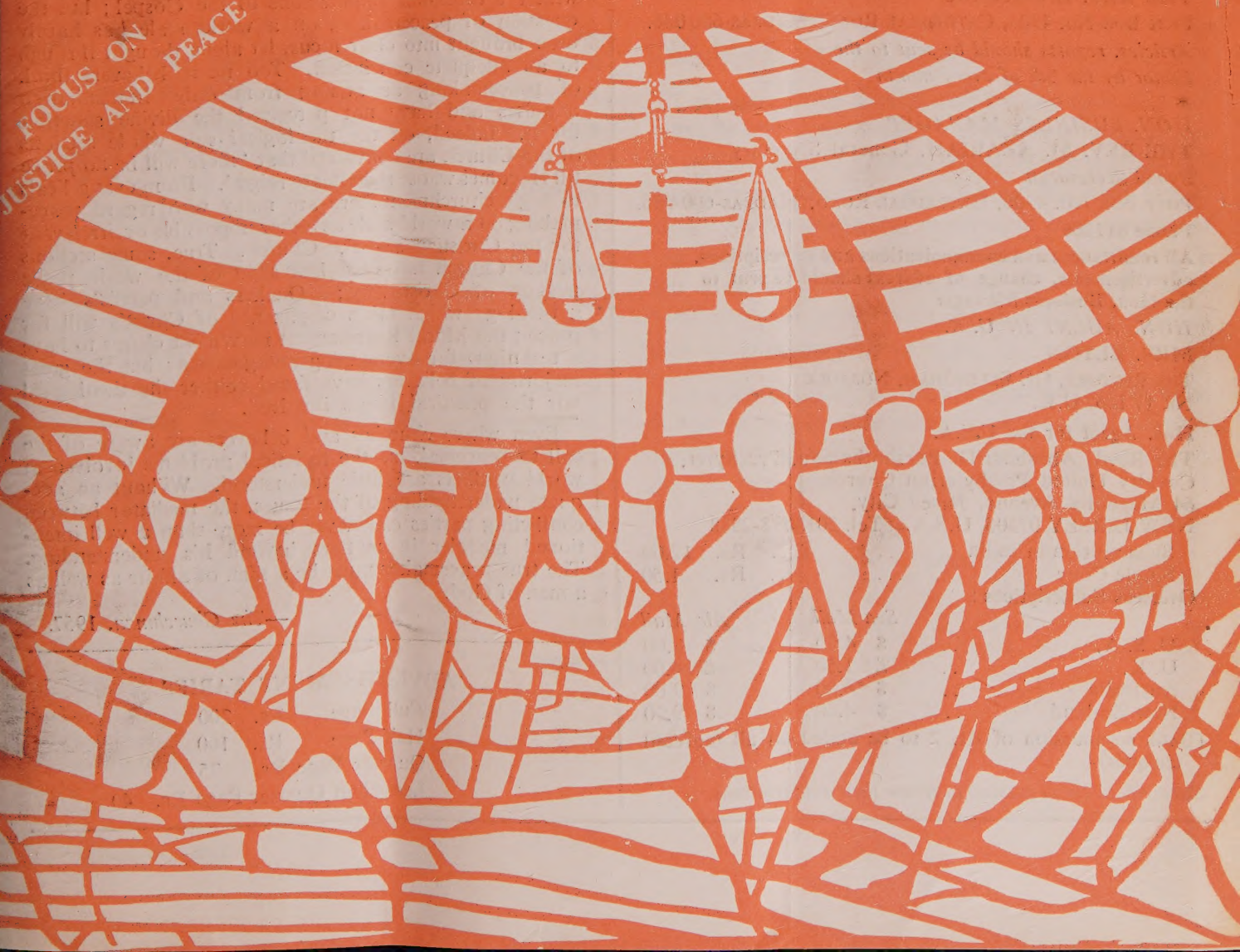


The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

● SEPTEMBER 1984

FOCUS ON
JUSTICE AND PEACE



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Opinions expressed by contributors do not commit the C.S.I.

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**The Magazine of the Church of South India
SEPTEMBER 1984**

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25 Years Ago

The Church has not yet worked out its theology, or its mission, of peacemaking. Early in its history it faced the fundamental problems of its faith and message; then it tackled problems of suffering, ignorance and slavery; in modern times it has re-discovered its world-wide mission of evangelism; somewhat belatedly it has come to grips with the economic implications of the Gospel; but the question of peacemaking on a world scale has hardly been brought into clear focus, let alone thought through to an adequate conclusion. Too many believers think of peacemaking as arising from only humanitarian impulses and have not perceived the divine sanction for it. Indeed, on the theological side whole sections of the Church are convinced that 'there will be no peace till He comes whose right it is to reign'. From evangelical to high churchmen there are many who regard peacemaking on a world scale as either impossible or irrelevant for the Christian and the Church. True, some sections of the Church have not lost sight of the world peace mission of Christianity; Quakers and pacifists have a theology which takes cognizance of Christ's will for peace; the Moral Rearmament movement claims to have a technique for overcoming antagonisms; but the great majority of believers have faced neither the theological nor the practical issues involved.

Even where churches and believers are aware of the call to peacemakers, the technical problems involved in world conflicts are little understood. Without an adequate understanding of the issues, the mediator between conflicting parties can never be more than a well intentioned meddler in matters beyond his understanding. The true peacemaker must be a man of affairs as well as a man of God.

—The Churchman, 1957.

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Moderator's Message

**Gal. 3 : 28 : ' There is neither Jew nor Greek,
there is neither slave nor free,
there is neither male or female ;
for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.'**

As we celebrate the formation of the Church of South India on the 27th of this month, let us call to mind that great event, the pioneers who laboured for the organic unity of the Church and the vision of one Church and one world that has been passed on to us. Let us renew our commitment to seeking wider unity of the Church and establishing one human community.

The Church is a called and gathered community. We are among those whom God has already gathered in a special way. God still continues to gather people. We are in this great movement revealed and initiated by God in Jesus Christ. God wants us to move on. He does not want us to be a static community of God's people glorying the past. Let us fight against all divisive tendencies both in the church and in the nation and involve creatively in all healing and reconciling movement of God.

As God's gathered people 'let no one define, himself or herself as other than God's person'. God sees no foreigners. He sees no outcasts. All people are God's creation and in God's creation there are no barriers. So let us look at people and situations through the eyes of God in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit that binds us together with the Triune God continues to help us to see the man-made barriers and enable us to overcome them.

We are called to speak the truth in love. God's love for us can only be measured against the immeasurable cost of Calvary. This is the love that has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. This we proclaim in our baptism.

This love is the basic ingredient of our unity. If we do not practice in our personal and congregational life, what we preach we will be simply like a noisy gong. The expected 'renewed eagerness and power for the proclamation of the gospel of Christ' may not appear in the life of the church. We need to do some hard thinking here.

I call upon all the baptised members and those who are called to special ministries in the church to examine and see whether there is anything wrong in our personal and inter-personal life which goes against this great love of God. Are we conducting ourselves in such a way that 'we may be a true leaven of unity in the life of India'? The cause of unity of the church will be very much damaged if we ourselves do not seek the fruits of love which God has so graciously given to us.

On this occasion of the 37th anniversary of the inauguration of the Church of South India, we pray God to renew our life so that 'there will be greater peace, closer fellowship and fuller life within the church'.

MOST REV. I. JESUDASAN
Moderator/Bishop

Church and the Socio-Economic and Political Issues

BISHOP ZACHARIAS MAR THEOPHILUS, *Mar Thoma Church.*

Like many other societies, Indian Society too in an exploitative society. Leaders exploit followers, Men exploit women, the Employer exploits the employed etc. etc. So long as people are weak, ignorant, disorganised, the powerful, the capable and the organised will tend to exploit them. The exploitation leads the exploited to a servitude and the exploiter to an oppressor. Thus exploitation brings about an oppressive structure.

Very often the socially backward and the economically poor are further exploited and oppressed. The fishermen of the sea coast, Harijans of the villages and the slum dwellers of the big cities are the constant preys of exploitation. The role of middle men is very noteworthy in this affair. Flesh trade, child labour and poor wages are some ways of exploiting women, Children and labourer. The enormous controlling and manipulating power of religious and political leaders on some sections of the society gives them a handle to exploit them enmass. All sorts of exploitation by different sections of society make the community life broken and belligerent.

Corruption is quite rampant in the Indian society. Red tapism, delay tactics, Vested interests and Partiality add to its size. This has led to inefficiency and irresponsibility in many important places. No Justice Prevails in a corrupt society. Never peace reigns in an unjust society. Justice and peace thrive only in an uncorrupt structure. While Harijans enjoy many constitutional privileges and economic benefits his counter part who accepted Christian faith is deprived of all of them. All methods have to be sought by the church to terminate such injustices.

A vigil core to watch, highlight, struggle, to mobilise public opinion against exploitative, oppressive and corrupt practices and persons has to be established. A Forum to suggest and realise structural change may be formed. They may have to link themselves with other agencies involved in such tasks to eradicate exploitation and corruption. The awareness and the maintenance of the dignity of any and every person is the concern of the church. Any sort of dehumanisation anywhere is a deep concern of the church. It must pick up and promote humanisation projects and programmes.

Economic imbalance is a threat to Indian society. The rich becoming richer and the poor becoming poorer is a growing phenomenon. A handfull of people enjoying and controlling the major share of land and money is a shame as well as a crime on the nation. Few affluent and many poor, few landowners and many landless, few

jobholders and many jobless, make a distortion to the society.

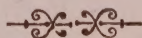
The whole community should become the beneficiaries in place of a few people. It has to be borne in mind in the production as well as distribution. The church has to take a clear vocal stand for more stringent land ceiling, laws on personal property, proper ratio between minimum and maximum wages, and investment on productive endeavours. Check measures have to be introduced to increase saving capacity along with the earning capacity.

Like air and water, every man has a birthright for land, house and a job. Every Indian should have a constitutional right for them. A fresh redistribution of land is an urgent need. A new social security scheme has to be introduced. Numerous social welfare schemes to secure and promote economic stability of the lower strata of people will have to be sponsored. Unless there is a 'preferential option for the poor' in all decision-making it will not take place.

In India nothing is non-political. Anything that concerns man and his community is political. As politics is a powerful medium of change it has obtained prime importance. Parties formed and fostered on religious groups and affiliations are a threat to the secular nature and character of our country. Similarly parties based on regional and linguistic identity are dangerous to the national integration and unity. In politics common ideology should find preference over petty parochialism. Political games based on religion, region or language are to be fought out. In a nation of plurality of religions—and when some of them are militant—secular parties are to be encouraged and strengthened.

Free and fearless Judiciary is a Pre-requisite for a just democratic society. Interference of political parties in the judiciary affairs affects their impartiality. More objectivity has to be brought in to the choice and appointment of judges. The church should not leave this area of justice and right to be soft peddled. Men of merit and reputation should be called to share that honour.

The Punjab and Assam issues may appear to be religious and linguistic problems. They are really political too. When any section of people is ignored or pampered that will cause a crisis. Political Justice has to be maintained. The Centre-state and inter-state relationships count a lot for the stability and progress of a united India. The picture of India as one political unit has yet to take shape. The churches in the Joint Council, spread over India should be able to share the concept of one church in a united India.



Olympic Games—Of Athletes and Religion

A top American woman Olympic athlete, facing her biggest test, had completely lost her confidence. She told religious counsellors at the athletes' village in the University of Southern California (USC) she felt guilty because she had not been reading her bible.

'We told her it was competing that mattered, and doing her best. We prayed together, she left a different person and did very well in her event,' said Licky Altman, 43-year-old laywoman in-charge of religious services at the USC village.

Even US sprinter and long jumper Carl Lewis, so far living up to his billing as the superstar of the 1984 Games, has publicly declared his religious beliefs.

'When I stand on the victory stand, I enjoy it. But I always think of the Bible. My first two gold medals are in the past now. But Jesus Christ remains', Lewis told a gathering at a Baptist Church here last night.

Altman said religion had never been so integrated into the Olympic Games as it has this year. In past Games, Olympic teams tended to bring their own chaplains, priests or other clergymen, or else arrange religious service in existing places of worship outside the Olympic village, she said.

This year, at the USC and two other university campuses used as Olympic villages, places of worship have been set up for the world's five major faiths.

These are jews, protestants, Roman Catholics, Buddhists and Muslims. Athletes of other faiths are guided, when possible, to places of worship outside the campuses.

At the USC, the holy places are all housed in the university's two-storey stucco and glass religious services centre, where Altman normally acts as religious counsellor.

The Islamic 'Mosque' is a large room on the first floor. Two Egyptian Imams (prayer leaders), after checking

precisely with compasses, set up a Mihrab (prayer niche) facing the holy city of Mecca. Altman purchased 30 oriental prayer rugs to complete the proper setting.

Non-Muslim athletes in the village are getting accustomed to what at first seemed a star concert at the open-air 'Village Inn' Coffee House.

At 10 O'clock each evening, the pop group Steens Tracksuit takes the microphone. 'Allah-O-Akbar' tone in a nasal chant in Arabic for a couple of minutes.

Though dressed in the uniform of Olympics as 'muezzin' (prayer caller) on hearing the call, a few Muslim athletes leave their coffee house tables and head for the music resumes.

Buddhists have a mediation room, where they can sit before a one-metre (three-foot) Buddha of white plaster of Paris, surrounded by fresh flowers and incense bowls.

Altman and her 17 volunteer assistants bring in special Hallah bread for Jewish services. Wine brought in for Christian communion is the only alcohol permitted in the USC village, apart from the larger beer which Australian athletes are allowed 'for medicinal purposes'.

Altman said she had been surprised and moved by 'they intense devotion of many of the athletes,' adding: 'Our Catholic priests have had more confessions in the last two weeks than they've had in the last four years from students.'

'I passed the chapel the other day and saw a young athlete, in his training gear, singing a hymn to the crucifix in a language I couldn't understand.'

'Another day, when there was a line outside the church, a young athlete who could wait no longer asked for a bible, got down on his knee in the lobby and prayed to God right there'.

—Reuter.

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The Struggle for Justice and Peace in India

THE REV. DR. K. C. ABRAHAM,* Bangalore.

The most disturbing aspect of the condition of the majority of the people in India is that they not only continue to be poor but have become poorer in spite of considerable developmental activities. The pattern of economic growth in our country favours the rich and creates imbalance in the relations between different sections of people. This is an unjust situation. This situation is supported and reinforced by the political system in our country. Any discussion on Peace and Justice in India should start reflecting on this unjust situation.

Yet our concept of poverty is woefully distorted. We attribute poverty to laziness, over population and other natural calamities. Certainly there are scarcity factors which aggravate the problem of poverty. But what has happened in the last three decades is not the result of scarce resources and the absence of developmental activities. The studies clearly show that in spite of developmental aids, the gap between the rich and poor is widening. The majority of the population is left outside the developmental process. They have to be satisfied with crumbs that are thrown to them by the elite.

Poverty, thus, is not merely an economic problem. There is a system that produces it and perpetuates it. Broadly defined, such system is one in which the decision-making process and control are concentrated in the hands of persons or groups whose interests are so fundamentally inimical to the well-being of life as a whole. Not only do they keep the masses away from the Centres of power, they also fail to solve the basic problems of mass poverty, glaring in-equalities, growing unemployment and rising prices. When there arises any organised effort by the masses to redress their grievances it is brutally suppressed. Imposition of authoritarian and repressive regimes, denial of human rights and excessive dependence on foreign resources are the natural development of the domination by the elite. 'A culture of silence is imposed upon the people, thus choking their cries for dignity, self-respect, right to life and right to food.'

Poverty disrupts the very fabric of human relationship. It brings new forms of cultural enslavement. M. M. Thomas points out, 'while technological advance, agricultural and industrial development and modernization of social structures are necessary they accentuate the pathological exploitative characteristics of traditional society while destroying their traditional humanizing aspects, if traditional power-structures and the social institutions in which they are embodied remain unchanged.' In this way the problem of poverty is social and cultural as well as economic and political. Careful analysis of seemingly

concealed working of the forces and consequences of it is highly essential. The fundamental concern is the quality of life, life in all its fulness. What is the good news of Jesus Christ to this situation?

Biblical response :

The prophetic tradition is unanimous in saying that poverty is a product of injustice. The poor exist and will continue to exist because there is reason for their continued existence. With penetrating insight the prophet Isaiah said :

Woe to those who decree iniquitous decrees,
and the writers who keep writing oppression,
to turn aside the needy from injustice and to
rob the poor of my people of their right, that
they may make the fatherless their prey. (Isa. 10 : 1-2)

And Amos fumed :

Hear these words, you cows of Bashan
Who are in the mountain of Samaria,
who oppress the poor, and crush the needy,
who say to their husbands,
'Bring, that we may drink !' (Amos. 4 : 1)

Woe to those who lie upon beds of ivory and
stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat
lambs from the flock, and calves from the
midst of the stall ; who sing idle songs to the
sound of the harp, and like David invent for
themselves instruments of music ; who drink
wine in bowls ; and anoint themselves
with the finest oils. (Amos 6 : 4-6)

When Jesus began His ministry His first public speech consisted of an announcement of the good news to the poor, liberation to the captives, and sight to the blind. But He did not consider poverty to be a national question. Neither did He regard it as a permanent institution. To Jesus, the question of the poor belongs to the realm of transcendence, to the issue of the universal reign of God on earth.

The misery of the poor signifies that the world of God's creation is under the spell of demonic powers. Hence, the vindication of the poor is a sign of God's victory over Satan. Jesus proved that poverty is more than a material issue. It is more than a moral concern. It is a theological question. Since poverty is ultimately a demonic phenomenon, its logic demands nothing less than the reign of God as answer. This is why the Church must meet the problem of poverty not only with political and ideological vigour but more so with an acute sense of religious urgency.

* Dr. K. C. Abraham is the Director of the Ecumenical Christian Centre, White field, Bangalore.

Response of the Church :

The response of the Church in India to this situation calls for a comment here. The Church deserves credit in moving into the areas of need. Very often this response has taken the shape of charitable and service institutions. The schools and hospitals that have become part of our Christian mission have done commendable service. While they meet these needs at a particular level they do not necessarily become agents for changing radically the structures of injustice. I cannot go into a detailed analysis of the functioning of such institutions. Several studies have taken place and they all point to one fact that the service institutions have only helped in maintaining the status quo. In many cases they also become subservient to the interests of the elite. A closer look at this is necessary for us.

Solidarity with the poor : Critical education

Service and charity are not the only forms of Church involvement. The missionary history clearly shows that the Church in India has been instrumental in creating a ferment for social change. A concrete example may be mentioned here. In an interesting study of British Missionary activity in the later nineteenth century in India, G. A. Oddie has brought into light some of the documents that illustrate the involvement of the missionaries in agitation for change. I was particularly interested in their heroic fight to change an unjust and exploitative practice followed in the indigo (a plant that yields blue dye) cultivation in Bengal. In this they opposed their own countrymen, the European planters. The system was that the poor ryots had to yield to the pressure of landlords and cultivate indigo. Not only was this cultivation unprofitable, it also led to the neglect of cultivation of the rice and other crops. European planters working through the landlords and with the support of police and other government machinery had designed a system by which cheap raw material was available. Missionaries first appealed to the planters to change this exploitative practice. Having failed in the moralistic approach, some of the missionaries organized a heroic fight against the system and at enormous cost, imprisonment, threat, loss of job and so on. They finally succeeded in changing it.

One or two aspects of this involvement stand out. Response to the gospel of Jesus Christ in a given context and the fight against unjust structures are integrally related. Some of the missionaries criticized their fellow workers who had involved in such social issues. But those who led the fight were clear about the integral relation between the gospel and the transformation of unjust structures.

We should also notice how in their fight they were in solidarity with all the victims regardless of their caste or religion. It is true that they were led to the fight when they saw the hardship of some of the Christians. But when the fight was directed to a system they have to broaden their base and include everyone who was subjected to the evil of the system. A deeper involvement in social issues borne out of our commitment to the gospel takes us to an open arena of human sufferings. It is also interesting that when they stood by the exploited people they had to oppose their own fellow Christians. In a context like that an alliance for the sake of perpetuating a so-called Christian identity was not so important as establishing solidarity with the suffering masses who were not necessarily Christians.

Very often, emphasis on reconciliation has in effect meant a way of maintaining the status quo against necessary radical changes. Many of the action groups feel for this reason, that they should speak more of conflict and less of reconciliation. We should not ignore the criticism implied in this position. The message of reconciliation that does not take seriously the nature of differences and also see the positive value of the conflict for social will not be meaningful for the struggle of different groups for justice. It is now widely recognized that legislation, public opinion and other apparatuses of democratic machinery alone cannot bring about the desired social justice for the weaker sections in India. They should be strengthened by the militant organized struggle of the poor.

On the other hand, it is true that we cannot absolutize conflict. That will end up in creating a self-righteous and dehumanizing order as was shown in the history of revolutions. The issue is how to keep the conflict inherent in any struggle for social justice and forgiving love in creative tension.

The present situation also demand that the Church should think seriously of the ways and means to involve itself radically in the situation. In the final analysis the people who are conscious of their exploitation and their strength to change the unjust situation, alone will be able to usher in the new order. The Church's task is to assist in this process of empowering the powerless. The recognition that people are strong and powerful comes only by a process of education that heightens their critical awareness. The Church can involve in this programme of education. New programmes of education should be thought out. The priority is not for big projects and institutions but concrete programmes that help the people to take a critical look at their own culture so that they may rediscover values and elements which are potential for their struggle. This programme of critical education should be extended to the Churches at large. They should be able to see how some of the economic practices create conditions of injustice. The local congregations need to be helped to make a connection between specific local issues affecting them and wider structural issues. For instance why is the purchase of essential drugs so costly? What is the effect of export oriented industries? How does judicial machinery function? It is important to raise critical questions about the emergence and maintenance of affluence and help the affluent to see that they enjoy the fruits of exploitation of the poor.

People's movement

Education for awareness building is the first step : That should lead to organised action. Today the poor are getting organised and their movements have brought a new wave of politics into our country. The Daliths, Tribals, Fisherfolk, women and other marginalised sections in many parts of the country are leading struggles for justice. The Church needs to be linked with these people's movements. The fishermen's struggle in Kerala led by Catholic priests and nuns have made headlines today. We need to take inspiration from this for our concrete action. A report about this has this to say. 'The consequence is a transition, at least as far as a section of the Church is concerned, from a Church associated with political action in solidarity with the poor, from a Church that is related to the higher ups in society to a Church that is tied to the interest of the oppressed, from

(Contd. on p. 7)

'A Jackfruit Theology'

THE MOST REV. D. C. GORAI, *Moderator, Church of North India*

In Genesis Chapter I, we find the creation narratives. God created everything—the creation of men and women is preceded by the creation of light, water, vegetation, living creatures and others. On the third day God created trees/plants/vegetations of different kinds and he found it good.

Today we are very much aware that human beings in their criminal ignorance are engaging themselves in destroying the creation of God by polluting water, by cutting down trees, destroying forests, killing different kinds of animals on the land and in the water. Thus the *ecological balance is so dangerously disturbed* that as a result the healthy existence of human beings is threatened.

In the months of July and August hopefully there will be plenty of rain all over India. Shall we thank God for this gift of water and be good stewards of water?

- (a) Every human being—rich and poor—has the right to have enough pure water to drink and for household work.
- (b) Every farmer—the marginalised or the capitalist—has rights to enough water for cultivation.
- (c) The industry needs water, but must take care to avoid pollution of river and sea.
- (d) The fish, frogs, seals, whales, etc. need unpolluted water to live and multiply themselves.
- (e) The traditional fishermen must not be victimised for other profiteering motives.

Hence water should not be wasted, polluted and monopolised. This is a gift of God, freely given. This demands that we become concerned about the situation. *Conservation of water and prevention of wastage of water need to be taken seriously.* Secondly, the reason for irregular rainfalls is due to the fact that *trees/forests/plants are cut down* in a very irresponsible way. God created trees/forests/plants/vegetation and found it good. Then who are we to underestimate the purpose of creation? Here 'Good' means lifesaving situation for human beings so shall we try to reverse the process of disturbed ecological balance by committing ourselves to *planting hundreds of trees/other vegetation, etc. so that it may contribute to the regular functioning of monsoons* and enable the sky to pour showers of blessing through seasonal rains and the trees may bear fruit. We need wholesome green vegetables and fruits in plenty. Every man, woman and child should have fruits to compensate their unbalanced diet. This is possible only if every family possesses some land, and takes the trouble to plant some trees.

Malnutrition is a big killer—the rainy season is the time to confront the killer. God created the world and found it good—that is, beautiful. *So shall we make our small earth something beautiful for God.* What is beautiful for God is a healing factor for all of us. So during this season shall we plant enough trees/plants/flower seedlings so that our environment becomes beautiful. *We in the church have plenty of land both in the urban and rural areas.* Shall we plant enough trees to contribute to restoring the ecological balance for the general health of people at large. Shall we make our compounds bloom with flowers, green vegetation and fruit-bearing trees, so that we contribute towards a wholesome environment.

Let people find peace in the midst of nature. It is very necessary to *cultivate peace and happiness through interdependence* of human beings by being honest to God and honest to each other through honest efforts.

This is a season to sow seeds and plant plants, so that health, wealth, beauty may be produced tomorrow. Today we are enjoying the labour of others. We are reaping where we have not sowed and laboured (John 4 : 34-38). Every reaper is called by God to be a sower also. So shall we as right stewards of the Mysteries of God be good sowers and planters, so that others may reap and harvest and carry on the work of God. Sowing and reaping have to go on simultaneously; any imbalance will be counter-productive. *We do not have the freedom to mortgage the future.* We are called for responsible discipleship in His Vineyard.

In the life of the Church the fellowship of the sower and reaper has to be properly understood. Yes, often we are unwise and do not think and plan for the work of God. We are responsible to carry on the work of God today and committed to help and strengthen the work for tomorrow when we are dead and gone. This is a wonderful fellowship of the labourers ('Saints'). This will be appreciated and demonstrated in so far as we are sowing and reaping and maintaining the balance of faith and order in the scheme of divine creation and redemption.

In 1971 in the Diocese of Barrackpore, I enjoyed lovely jackfruits from a big tree in the church compound. I enquired who planted it. We came to know that an Oriya gardener (mali) planted it on the order of Miss M.D. MacArthur. I thanked the unknown mali and the missionary lady and elevated the mali as a missionary because today we are enjoying the fruit of his hard labour and recognised his contribution to the good of the community.

This made me painfully aware that every ounce of pleasure we enjoy is normally at the cost of pounds of sweat and blood of hundreds of poor people. It is time to evaluate the situation and repent and reverse the process. As I enjoyed the jackfruit the thought came to my mind — 'Do I have the moral right to reap the harvest unless I sow/plant more fruit-bearing trees for posterity?' So we wanted to celebrate the reaping of the harvest by planting a dozen more different fruit-bearing trees in the Bishop's Lodge Compound. I had the Vision—'to go on sowing seeds/plants without worrying about the time of fruit bearing.' *Fruit-bearing and growth are in the hands of God, and God never fails.* Our failures are attributed to God and hence our sinful situation pervades and permeates (Matthew 13).

In Barrackpore Diocese, we planted hundreds of trees every year. Plant a few valuable trees today; in 10-15 years time these will contribute to construction of a village church or school. *So the planter is a donor and every donee is called to be a donor. Unless this happens then we are not fulfilling the scheme of salvation.* After sowing, a big percentage of seeds may not bear fruits, but do not worry, it is all the more an incentive for all increased quantum of seeds being sown. This is possible if every believer discharges his/her responsibility as a sower; then the crisis could be averted. God has promised to provide enough for everybody's needs but not to meet everybody's greed. Hence let us recognise and accept Jesus Christ as the water of life and let us live and provide life-giving water to others.

'A Resolution without action is no decision'—It is Time for Action.

The Struggle . . . —(Contd. from p. 4)

a Church that contributed to the maintenance of the status-quo, to a Church that has become prophetic instrument of total (not excluding social) transformation. In the eyes of the powerful the Church has changed from being a helpful presence to a threatening and dangerous presence.

The fundamental challenge is how the Church can really become a Church of the people not merely for the people. There are of course different levels at which we can participate in the struggles of the poor. It could be an interpretative role—interpreting the wider significance of such struggle, or a supportive role—that is giving moral and financial support for the struggle. Eg. arranging legal aid for the victims. But basic to all this is the attitude of openness, borne out of a new understanding of what the Church is all about.

In this presentation I am speaking mostly about the economic injustice as a threat to peace and wellbeing. There are other issues that we need to look at but my main concern is to suggest an overriding frame work whether we speak of peace or political action. Peace cannot be built on foundations of injustice. Peace requires an order in which justice and participation of all people is ensured. The WCC document puts this perspective clearly 'The Churches today are called to confess anew their faith and to repent for the times when Christians have remained silent in the face of injustice or threats to peace. The Biblical vision of peace with justice for all, of wholeness, of unity for all God's people is not one of several options for the followers of Christ. It is imperative in our time.'

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LEST WE FORGET

RT. REV. DR. SUNDAR CLARKE, *Deputy Moderator*

Introduction

It is good for us to look back upon the 35 years we have traversed and thank God not only for the Church of South India but also for those noble men and women who have contributed much to the life, progress, work and witness of our united Church.

At the very outset I must admit that it is humanly impossible for me to recount all the people who have played their role in the life of the Church. Many have been small, many have been big, many have been educated, many have been uneducated, many have been rich, many have been poor, many have been urban, many have been rural. We need to thank God for the whole Church. However, we shall try to recollect a few among the many who have contributed much to the life of this united Church. I shall take it upon myself in a very personal capacity to be asked to be forgiven for the lapses, for the gross negligence, for the failures in mentioning some names who certainly have contributed much and whom I have forgotten to mention.

Founders of Ecumenism

Perhaps it will be good to go back to the year 1709 when ecumenism was put into action, when the gospel was not merely proclaimed but practised. In a very interesting way the gospel came to India. It came through an ecumenical movement. In a sense ecumenism preceded the missionary movement.

Through the initiative taken by the Danish King Frederik, the fourth, two German protestant missionaries landed at Tranquebar on the 9th of July, 1706. Ziegenbalg and Pleuchoff were perhaps forerunners of the ecumenical movement and we thank God for them. The German F. Schwartz worked along with the Anglicans and the Lutheran, W.T. Ringeltaube, worked for the London Missionary Society. There were other missionaries who worked together and pooled their resources.

Interesting Interludes

One of Ziegenbalg's first converts was Aaron, who was born in 1698, baptized on the 5th of August 1718 by Ziegenbalg and interestingly enough Aaron's grandson who came from the lively Lutheran stock was taken over from Tranquebar, trained in Tinneveli, brought to St. George's Cathedral, Madras, and ordained the first South Indian Anglican priest. This is just an interesting note not of ecumenism but perhaps of floor crossing (a very much used word in politics) or in our language 'sheep stealing,' or could even be called negative ecumenism.

Ecumenical awakening

The 19th century was a period of missionary awakening and trainers and colonists brought in not only their commodities and colonial power but also the gospel of Jesus

Christ. Perhaps in a sense motives other than spiritual can be channelised by God for nobler means.

Then followed by missionaries, co-operation and interaction took place between the missionaries. Missionaries came from different backgrounds and denominations and sought from time to time to come together for fellowship and sharing of experiences. This coming together of missionaries gave occasion to a deeper insight for the needed unity for the mission of the Church. Summer time was not merely holiday time for missionaries. Along with holidays they combined business—the business of coming together to find God's purpose for union. Missionary conferences were held during summer and sometimes during other parts of the year in cooler places like the Nilgiris, Kodaikanal, etc.

A few other illustrations of missionary co-operation should be mentioned. As early as 1850 missionaries from different parts of India came to conference together and met in Bengal in the year 1855. In 1857 another group from the North Western Indian Frontiers came together. The scenic Nilgiris was another Centre for a Conference in 1858 at Ootacamund. 1862 was a significant year for a joint meeting in Punjab. This perhaps resulted in the first general missionary conference for the whole of India in Allahabad in 1872. In the words of Bengt Sundkler, 'the difference which once had bloomed so large in England or America appeared in another light against the background of Hinduism.'

Unity begins

In the late eighteen hundreds and the early nineteen hundreds missionary conferences began to get popular, and they needed to recognize the significant role missionaries have played in bringing together Christians in India. One such memorable conference was in Madras in the year 1900 with 150 missionaries representing forty-five missionary organizations with twenty-four Indians who came together to discuss church union under the able leadership of the most outstanding Indian Bishop, Azariah of Dornakal. Other names to be mentioned are the Rev. Samuel Joseph in the Madurai District and the Rev. Meshack Peter of the Madras area. C.J. Lucas is another name along with J.V. Job and Santiago. These names cannot be erased in the early attempts at church union.

Dr. Jacob Chamberlain, a missionary from the Reformed Church of America who was the Moderator in 1901, called for a Synod in Vellore and made bold attempts to form a United Church at a provisional Synod. This was a significant milestone in early ecumenism. This provisional Synod comprised of a total membership of about 12,000 having about 2,000 from the United Free Church and about 10,000 from the Arcot Presbytery. The following year the South Travancore group comprising

of seventy-one churches with about 12,000 Christians came together. This was working towards an amalgamation of the London Missionary Society, which was English with the American Board in the Madurai District.

At this stage the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches seeking for union in India was held in July 1905. This again brought England and the United States together, and did not seem to receive much objection from their respective home boards.

1908 will remain a year never to be forgotten for it was in this year that the South Indian United Church came into existence. Through this United Church the Presbyterians joined with the Congregationalists. This great event took place in Madras, in not too big a church called the Davidson Street Church, now renamed as Charles Memorial Church. The two Moderators, the Rev. Dr. Wyckoff and the Rev. J.P. Cotalingam stood together and declared their oneness in Christ and their total pledge to the cause of unity.

As an Indian I can recognize, though not too obviously, a deeper under-current of nationalism which at this stage was a steering spirit within the political life of the country. We were coming together in a common search for our national identity and independence. Such a spirit pervading in the country, the Indian Christians were also led to search for a oneness in Christ.

The step taken by Wyckoff and Cotalingam was to be an initial step; for they were soon opening their arms to the Wesley Methodist Church headed by C.H. Monahan of Madras, Guildford and W.E. Tomlinson of Mysore. The idea of federation was being considered. Men like Maclean, Bishop Azariah, K.T. Paul and H.A. Popley began to see the movement of Ecumenism not only as a coming together of denominations, but also as a movement of coming together of the nationals with the non-nationals. The nationals were beginning to be heard and non-nationals were beginning to listen.

So we see that the spirit of nationalism was a contributed factor to the United Church. Deep in the minds of the Indians was the longing for freedom and for freedom to do something which had not been done. This was also a stage for perhaps not a union but more the formation and establishment of the Anglican Church in South India. We shall now briefly trace the search for union in the Anglican Church. The Madras Diocese was established in 1835, the Travancore Diocese in 1879 and the Tinneveli Diocese in 1896. Outstanding among the Anglican Bishops during this period 1861-1898 was Bishop Gell, who served a long term in Madras and consecrated two Bishops in Tinneveli and Travancore from the SPG section and the CMS section. The time was not yet ripe for an Indian Bishop, so Gell consecrated R. Caldwell in Tinneveli and T. Walker in Travancore. Succeeding Gell, Henry Whitehead was consecrated Bishop in 1899 and there was a certain shift in the theological position.

We must take a look into the non-Anglicans. One of notable leaders, whose name cannot be erased from the history of CSI, is the American, Sherwood Eddy. In the Faith and Order discussions and in simple practical ways he spent all his energies in bringing together people and denominations. In his own words 'we look forward to reunion not by way of compromise but by way of comprehension'. In the early stages there was a definite antagonism to the historic episcopate, which to Whitehead was a 'necessary safeguard of unity'. This did not receive much appeal to the congregationalists for to men like

Lucas this was rather 'an extraordinary claim of a very ordinary stand'.

In the Pre-Anglican days the very outstanding congregational minister H.A. Popley played not only a leading role in the union movement but he was one of those who completely identified himself with Indians and has even been responsible for good Indian lyrics. Along with him stand Sherwood Eddy and Bishop Azariah. The tall and stately V.S. Azariah was tall and stately even in hastening the process of union. There were also undergirding spiritual figures like Stanley Jones, the American evangelist.

Unforgettable Tranquebar

Meschack Peter from the S.I.U.C. and Bishop Azariah were keenly engaged in the union issue, and they suggested that the representatives of their two churches should stay on after the others had left and attempt to reach a decision and an agreement on a resolution.

The leading themes for all the discussions was the text about the unity of the church, St. John 17:21. Bishop Azariah dominated the discussions. He pressed the matter of episcopal ordination in a way which brought some opposition from a few S.I.U.C. representatives. They maintained that St. Paul and Timothy were ordained by deacons of the churches, and that, therefore, no episcopal ordinations were needed. In this situation Eddy's help was of great importance to Azariah. Eddy was regarded as belonging to the S.I.U.C. But he had for many years, particularly under the influence, of Bishop Brant and Newman Smyth, stressed the importance of the episcopal element in any future national church of India. These viewpoints, together with an attempt to reconcile the three main forms of church government represented at the meeting, Episcopal, Presbyterian and Congregationalists, determined Eddy's contribution to the framing of the Manifesto.

With the help of Eddy, Popley, Santiago and Meshack Peter, Bishop Azariah was then able to present a resolution to the conference which was accepted and afterwards became known as the Tranquebar Manifesto.

It might be good to thank God for those 33 powerful pioneers who prayerfully planned and prepared the Tranquebar Manifesto. The Anglicans, the Rt. Rev. The Bishop of Dornakal V.S. Azariah, Rev. S.G. Maduram, Rev. J.B. Gnanaolivu, Rev. A. Devadas, Rev. A. Savarimuthu, Rev. A. Ezekiel, Rev. D. Koilpillai. South India United Church, the Rev. V. Santiago, Rev. M.S. Taylor, Rev. Thangam Gabriel, Rev. P. Asirvadam, Rev. Y.J. Taylor, Rev. G. Vendanayagam, Rev. N. Gnanasigamani, Rev. Y.D. Samuel, Rev. Meshack Peter, Rev. P. Arivanandam, Rev. M.L. Jivaratnam, Rev. Benjamin Thomas, Rev. L.I. Stephen, Rev. G. Gnanamuthu, Rev. P. Thangamuthu, Rev. E.W. Thayil, Rev. M. Simon, Rev. D.C. Hutton, Rev. S. Soans, Rev. S. Ambatt, Rev. P. Zacharias, Rev. N. Edapalan, Rev. Ch. Herman, Rev. S. Parmanandam, Rev. H.A. Popley and G. Sherwood Eddy.

We thank God for these 33 stalwarts and we should not forget that initially the Marthoma Church was also involved in the discussions but as time went by they also slipped by !!

The birth of the C.S.I.

There are many names that can be and need to be mentioned but I shall mention a few. The Rev. J.S.M. Hooper

was perhaps the methodical Methodist who planned, engineered and worked out all the details of the union. He was rightly given the privilege to preach at the Service of Inauguration on the 27th of September 1947. He was truly a man of God who did things with prayer, with integrity and with dignity. He was ably assisted by a team of men, some of whose names come to my mind, Bishop Michael Hollis, Bishop C.K. Jacob, Bishop H. Sumitra, Rev. Harold Molten, Bishop Leslie Brown, M.C.J. Lucas, Mr. G.V. Job, Rev. J.A. Jacob, Gurushatha, etc. One of the men who played a very important part is Bishop Michael Hollis. We cannot forget or ignore the role he played in the early stages of the Church of South India. He was a Prince among the Anglicans and he became so one with the Methodist and the South Indian United Church that he could be hardly taken as coming from an Anglican stalk. He gave up his stately office (the third dignitary of the State in British India) and became almost a servant of the Church. He dealt with problems patiently, wisely and understandingly. He was rightly chosen as the first Moderator of the C.S.I.

Then came another leader in Hospet Sumitra, a man without guile, a man with charisma, charm and character. Bishop Ananda Rao Samuel like Sumitra was gifted with similar gifts to be a Moderator of the CSI for four terms. Bishop Sumitra steered through the very early stages with tact and with dignity and his name cannot be erased from the pages of the history of the Church of South India. C.K. Jacob was another man of that period, who though a stately Anglican Bishop of the United Travancore and Cochin became a humble childlike servant of God. A rare and unique product indeed. Bishop Gurushantha was another outstanding contributor to the Episcopal order. Bishop Chellappa was also another outstanding contributor to the Episcopal order but his good episcopal ministry was very shortlived.

A live wire in the Church of South India was G.V. Job, a simple, large hearted, outspoken, brilliant Indian leader. G.V. Job was not only the man of his day but will always be remembered as a man of today. It could well be that his brilliance was inspired by men like Chenchiah and Chakarni (even if not directly but certainly indirectly).

Among the laity a rare pick and find was the able and wise Administrator Rajiah D. Paul. Perhaps both as an administrator and as a speaker, it would be difficult to 'OUT RAJIAH, RAJIAH'. He was an able administrator, wise guide and prolific reader and writer. Another very notable lay leader is D.A. Thangasamy who reminded us that the Church was not merely Bishops, Overseers and Priests. He himself belonged to the Order of the Laos and reminded us of the significance of this order. We had the financial wizard Gunamonie who came from Kanyakumari and lived in Trivandrum and held the finances not only of Kanyakumari diocese but also of the entire Synod. He was a true builder of finances and a man of outstanding integrity and ability.

One of the Master builders in the Church of South India was Lesslie Newbigin. With his simplicity, dignity, concern for the poor was combined scholarship, academic brilliance and Godliness. He was a Master builder. A.J. Appasamy, another brilliant man came on the scene a little later to offer his wise and Godly leadership as Bishop of Coimbatore. At about the same time we had the evangelistic Bishop Sargant who spared no pains to visit his very large diocese and gave himself for the Church

and our people. A man who left a notable impression on my mind is the Godly and praying Bishop Jebaraj. I was one of his admirers and watched him with great admiration and gratitude to God. Quiet, simple and sincere he managed the large diocese of Tinneveli as a man of prayer and as a man of God. So we see the broad spectrum of leadership in the episcopal bench.

One of the mysterious acts of God was to give us a leader who did not function long enough to fulfil our expectations. Bishop I.R.H. Gnanadason, one of the most outstanding men of our times with joy and delight was elected as Moderator, took ill and could not function for long. However, one cannot gloss over his contributions to the Church of South India.

Women leaders have also played a notable role and one should recognize the outstanding abilities of Mrs. Daisy Gopal Ratnam. She was a woman with tremendous potential and great qualities of leadership. Among others should be mentioned Dr. Ida Scudder, Honeyggar, Kamala Yesupatham, Joyce Woolard, Mary Gee, Harnet Brumber Frances De Brian, Christine Doraisamy, Rajammal, Sister Rachel Joseph, Sr. Beatrice Daniel Deaconess Carol Graham, Mrs. Neela Cornelius, Sister Nesamani Vedakan, Sister Jane Moses, Margaret Harris (née) Valentine, Ruby Alagamani and a score of others.

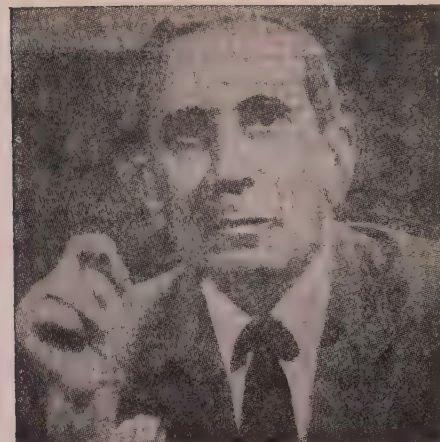
Among pastors we have had tood and Godly pastors some who have played a quiet, docile, prayerful role and some who have contributed to various fields of the christian ministry. I was greatly impressed by J.R. Macphail who came from a Scottish background but who turned out to be a very significant and outstanding liturgical leader in our church. He had a solid mind and often seen with a solid cigar and produced a solid liturgy! A man to be admired. We have had men like Monahan, Leith, Ellis Shaw, Wierenga, John Piet, E. Heideman, Thorpe, Kulendran, Lipp, Legg, Benjamin, Ramaseshan, who have played their quiet role in contributing much to the leadership of the church. When talking about liturgy the name of Lesslie Brown can never be forgotten. He was the man who shook the liturgical world through the first CSI Liturgy for Holy Communion. In many ways Lesslie Brown after Dom Gregory Dicks shook the liturgical world with an inclusiveness of history and contemporariness. He drew most of his sources from liturgies old and new, Eastern and Western and could well be called the 'FATHER OF THE C.S.I. LITURGY'.

I have mentioned a number of names. To some these may appear as unknown persons but in the life of the Church and in my personal knowledge these are some of the men who have played a vital role in building up the Church of South India. It is well possible that I have failed, yes failed miserably, leaving out some important persons. For this I would ask to be excused. This is more a slip of the mind than a deliberate omission. I realize I am more than fallible, my impressions and experiences still more filliable and my memory most fallible!! I crave forgiveness for my omissions. On this 36th Anniversary of the Church of South India, we offer ourselves as a fresh offering to be dedicated further for this Church and we also offer these men and women as a thank offering to God. There are still many, many men like peons, clerks, evangelists, who have played a significant role in this united church.—LEST WE FORGET. (All these and many others not mentioned are our thank offerings to God.)

'The Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth'

—Rev. 19 : 6.

THE RT. REV. D. J. AMBALAVANAR, *Jaffna Diocese—Sri Lanka.*



The theme of this text from the book of Revelation, recurs as a triumphant note of faith throughout the Bible. The Psalmist sings : ' the Lord reigns ; let the earth rejoice ' (Ps. 97 : 1) ; ' the Lord reigns ; let the peoples tremble ' (Ps. 99 : 1). The prophet exclaims, ' How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings who says to Zion ' Your God reigneth ' (Is. 52 : 7). It is the same note that the author of the Book of Revelation strikes in his courageous affirmation of faith ' the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. ' These words are probably familiar to many more through its use in Handel's famous Oratorio, *The Messiah*, than as words from the Book of Revelation. It is said that on one particular occasion at a performance of Handel's *Messiah*, by an error the Hallelujah chorus was listed in the programme as : ' The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. ' It might have been just a printer's devil but it equally well could have been a cynic's tilt at the Christian faith, seeing the horrible condition of the world ; would it not be more appropriate to say ' God has resigned ' than to say ' God reigns ' or ' God rules ' ? The events of the last few weeks in our country could very well lead many to say with the cynic ' God has resigned. ' The killings, the arson, the looting, the wanton destruction and all other conceivable forms of man's inhumanity to man which we witnessed can shatter people's faith in an Almighty God, leave alone in a just and righteous God. How can anybody who has witnessed these events dare to claim ' the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth ' ? How can the preacher proclaim to the victims of these events, ' God reigns ' ? We could only say one thing. Neither the Psalmist nor the prophet in Isaiah 52 nor the writer of the Book of Revelation affirmed this faith at a time when everything went well with the people. They were not people who lived in the security and prosperity of royal palaces singing joyfully ' the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. ' The prophet was indeed the prophet of the Exile who spoke to his people in exile in Babylon. He proclaimed the good tidings of God's reign to a people who wailed in their enslaved oppressed condition ' how can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land ' ? The author of the Book of Revelation was a prisoner in the isle of Patmos. He addressed his message to Churches suffering persecution under the reign of Emperor Domitian in the last decade of the first century. It is to enslaved, oppressed and persecuted people that the good news of God's reign was proclaimed. But how could they have proclaimed such a message when the facts around them so patently contradicted all that they were trying

to claim for God ? Did God indeed reign or was it the oppressor and the persecutor who reigned ? To the prophet and the seer the answer was clear. ' On the earth the broken arcs ; in the heaven a perfect round. ' God is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. He is Lord of history and against all the travails and turmoils of history is written our Lord's triumphant word ' It is finished. ' The Christian therefore understands his sufferings in the light of the cross. As Soren Kierkegaard put it, ' When I think of God, I think of Him upon His throne of sorrow. ' The end of the story is not Golgotha but the Resurrection morn.

The vision of God's final triumph, the vision of the final consummation of history, the hope of God's kingdom, can be a pleasing dream but of what comfort are such visions to those for whom murder, arson, looting and destruction are the present reality ? It is in the midst of such reality that the prophet claims ' The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever ' (Rev. 11 : 15). The present oppression, suffering and persecution are understood as part of the total process. They are of the very warp and woof of history. Israel had to learn this lesson through the experience of the Exodus. Deliverance from the oppression in Egypt did not mean life in a land flowing with milk and honey. It was first the hard discipline of the wilderness, a period of trial and testing, an opportunity for endurance and deepening of faith. Above all it was the time to learn to put trust in God and God alone the true source of deliverance and liberation. The liberation theologians of our day have helped us to understand afresh the meaning of the Exodus as a paradigm of the story of liberation of all peoples and nations. The life of true freedom is God's purpose for all peoples. Horace Greeley said, ' it is impossible mentally or socially to enslave a Bible reading people. ' It was this faith of a Bible reading people that found expression in the words of John F. Kennedy, ' we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend to assure the survival and success of liberty. '

It is well known that the finest violins are made from the spruce trees that grow high in the mountains. Having endured the snows, and the storms, and having been bent, beaten and tossed about by strong winds, the timber develops the resonance necessary for the best violins. The forces of oppression can be creatively absorbed and transformed into a means of bringing forth harmonious

music. The story is told of a family that had experienced a terrible night of storm. The little girl asked her father at breakfast table, 'What was God doing last night during the storm?' Then answering her own question, she said, 'I know, God was making the morning.' In God's perspective the trials of an oppressed people cannot but lead to the morning of deliverance and freedom.

Sri Lanka is a multi-lingual, multi-racial and multi-religious country. Ever since independence, for more than three decades the country has witnessed racial strife and conflict bursting into violence from time to time. The

desire of all our peoples is for reconciliation and peace based on the liberty of all the people and justice for all the people. Those who desire this and work for it cannot but heed the words of Theodore Roosevelt, 'this country will not be a good place for any of us to live in unless make it a good place for all of us to live in.' Those of us who affirm our faith that 'the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth' can never forget that He reigns as the prince of peace. Freedom and Peace are the gifts of the God who reigns. A gift of God is always both a gift and a task and to which we are sent forth is to be liberators and peacemakers in our time.

Rev. & Mrs. JIM Chambers' Visit to C.S.I.

Rev. J. B. CHAMBERS, O.B.E., M.A., S. Ph.D.

On March 9th, 1983, in a room in Singapore, Rev. Robert Waters, the Secretary of the Congregational Union of Scotland, Bishop P. Victor Premasagar of India, and I, talked over some aspects of the Healing Ministry of the Church. Mr. Waters suggested that the time had come for a Healing and Teaching Mission to Scotland and England, and suggested my wife and I go to Scotland in 1984 and conduct such a Mission in an endeavour to present, a Biblical reasoned case for Churches to carry out the injunction of Scripture to 'preach the Kingdom of God and Heal the Sick' given by Jesus to His disciples so long ago. (Luke 9:2.)

Bishop Premasagar was concerned that such a Mission should be extended to India and it was decided to present a case to the Council for World Mission to finance the venture. The whole matter was largely left in the hands of the Rev. Bob Waters. After much planning, a request was made to the Council for World Mission Executive to finance the International travelling expenses, all other expenses to be met by those participating in the Mission. The Council for World Mission Executive decided to meet two-thirds of the international travel and Mr. Waters was left with the task of finding the rest, appealing to the Congregational Union of Scotland and the Congregational Federation of England, as well as the Churches in Britain taking part in this venture.

After some 2 months in Scotland and England, my wife and I arrived in Hyderabad on 19th June, and were welcomed by the officers of the Diocese, taken to Secunderabad to Church House, and further welcomed by my old friend, Bishop Premasagar.

The time spent in India was well organised. In the Medak Diocese, three Retreats were organised, one at Dichpalli, which besides introducing us to a host of ministers of that area, also gave us opportunity of seeing and hearing at first hand, the invaluable work of the Leprosy Hospital. I intend to write more fully of some of these things when we get home to New Zealand, because our people need to know more of what is going on in many aspects of the work of the Church of South India.

The second Retreat was held at Nizamasagar, which, like the first, was over a period of 1½ days. Again a new opportunity of meeting a further group of ministers. The third retreat in the medak Diocese was at Osmansagar, with still another group, the gathering being concentrated into one day.

In all some 100 ministers gathered and the lectures took the form of Bible Study to show the Church has Biblical

authority to carry out the Healing Ministry; that God is still the Healer, and His Son is still actively concerned in this Ministry, and the Holy Spirit makes us aware of this authority to carry out the Healing Ministry; that God is this Ministry, and the Holy Spirit makes us aware of this. The methods Jesus used in Healing, were dealt with, and their relevance in today's world was considered. There were sessions for questions on all aspects of the Healing Ministry of the Church, but throughout all, the note was sounded that Jesus Christ still heals today. The questions posed covered Faith; the position of the Medical Profession; Reasons why some do not get physically healed; the necessity to seek wholeness of Body, Mind and Spirit; the healing of relationships at all levels, and so on. There were lively exchanges of experiences and many of the ministers seemed persuaded that this was, and still will be part of their Pastoral work.

Between the second and third retreats in Medak Diocese, my wife and I went to Vijayawada, to the Diocese of Krishna-Godavary, where again we were warmly welcomed by many people, including Bishop T. B. D. Prakasa Rao. It was of course, a delight to meet Mrs. Ruth Saunders, a New Zealander, and later, her husband John and the other members of the family. The Rev. P. J. Christopher had most to do with the two Retreats conducted in this Diocese, and also gave us hospitality. These gatherings were one-day meetings in 2 different areas, and the attendances if ministers were very small. However, again the same interest was evidenced in the subject and it is to be hoped that some practical demonstration will eventuate to the Glory of God. My wife and I are grateful for all co-operation, and there were many highlights in our visit including the Commissioning Service for 10 Evangelists in the Medak Cathedral; the Welcome Home Service to the Rev. and Mrs. B. D. Premasagar, and the opportunities to take other services in local churches.

From the short time we have been here, my wife and I have been impressed by many signs of vitality in the C.S.I. The Training of Evangelists, which has gone on over a period of time, is a practical and fruitful form of ministry, together with some attempt at pioneering missionary work in villages where there is no Christian Church. Further Training Courses are in view for the future and should they eventuate, much good will come from them. Should the leaders and helpers maintain a vital link with their Lord, great advances will be evident in the work of the Church and His Kingdom.

Thank you for the opportunity of serving with you, and for all you have done to make our stay here enjoyable.

Church's Response to Issues and Concerns of Christians of Scheduled Castes Origin

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I. Introduction

A National Convention on the plight of the Christians of Scheduled Castes origin took place for the first time in the history of the Church in India at Bangalore in June 1978. This was jointly sponsored by the N.C.C.I. and the Catholic Bishops Conference of India and was attended by over 200 representatives from most of the Churches from all over India. It has revealed quite a lot about the present plight of the Christians of Scheduled Castes origin in this country. Among other things it came out that out of the total of about 20 million Christians of all denominations in India today, about 13 million belong to Scheduled Castes and about 2 to 3 million belong to the Scheduled tribes. It was specifically noted that such a vast majority of people from one of India's significant religious minorities was being subjected to blatant injustice and discrimination based on religion by the Government of India that claims to be a secular, socialistic and democratic republic. This constitutionally invalid discrimination against a section of the citizens arises from the Presidential Order No. 19 of 1950. This Order in paragraph No. 3 states: 'Notwithstanding anything contained in paragraph No. 2, no person who professes a religion different from the Hindu or Sikh religion shall be deemed to be a member of the Scheduled Caste'. The implication of this above order is that the constitutional provided privileges and compensatory benefits to the socially and economically oppressed sections of India's population called 'Scheduled Castes' are denied to them if they profess the Christian religion. Behind this religious discrimination against Christianity is the assumption that Christianity does not recognise caste divisions and so the Christians of Scheduled Caste origin are not eligible to the social handicap benefits in the form of reservations and concessions for employment and educational opportunities and for reserved seats in the legislatures. But then even Sikhism as a Religion does not recognise caste divisions and theoretically eliminates the idea of caste. And yet the above Presidential Order recognises the existence of caste divisions within the Sikh religion but not in the Christian religion. It is this discriminatory treatment meted out to as many as 15 million Christians that this convention decided to fight against by making representations to the Central Government, and if necessary by other legal means. Thus already a Congress member of Parliament, Mr. G.S. Reddy, had introduced a private bill seeking deletions of this obnoxious paragraph No. 3 above referred to. But nothing came of it and so Professor P. J. Kurien, M.P. introduced on 26th February of 1980 another bill for the same purpose which is still pending before the Parliament. In the meantime the Madras based Voluntary Organisation called Society for Social Action has moved the Supreme Court in November 1983, seeking removal of this unconstitutional discrimination. But the Official Church itself had only been making representations through Memoranda to the successive Prime Ministers right from the time of Jawaharlal Nehru numbering almost 40 such representations all with no avail. Only in the Madras Diocese a different method was followed in 1979 when a memorandum on this subject

was presented to the Governor of Madras for onward transmission to Delhi through a 5 hour long and silent procession of over 20,000 people marching through the streets to the Governor's palace.

But the 1978 National Convention had also taken note of several other factors that keep down the Christians of Scheduled Caste origin who form more than 75% of the total Church membership in India. The convention particularly identified the oppressive structures that existed not only in the Society at large but also within the Church. But this first ever attempt at analysing the causes and conditions for the plight of the Christians of scheduled caste origin were not followed up by appropriate actions by the individual Church bodies that were represented there. An agreed statement from the Convention was sent out as a message to the Churches in India. But the response to the convention and its message came in the form of ripples and reactions and that too from a very few. The 18 member action Committee appointed there became inactive after 2 meetings, one of them with the Prime Minister of India. The President of the NCCI and the CBCI who were the joint Conveners of this team for some reason have become quiet and complacent on this whole issue. But fortunately certain individuals, action groups and Study institutes have continued at least the discussion of this issue. Thus can be mentioned the All India Federation of Associations of Scheduled Caste Christians based in Trichy; the publication of books like 'The Twice Alienated' by Dr. Wilson of Hyderabad, the setting up of a Diocesan level department in Madras called 'Justice for the Oppressed' which followed a Seminar on 'The Church fights for the oppressed' in 1979; The All India Tamil Nadu Conference of the Christians of scheduled caste origin in January 1982 at Vellore and the very significant 'Caste class study programme' by the CISRS in Bangalore which has been publishing their results through a document called 'Samata, since 1981. I am sure there are other such activities relating to this problem of the Christians of scheduled caste origin in other parts of the country of which I am ignorant. Then of course, the very important contribution in facing this problem came from the CCA-URM when they organised a Workshop on the Role of Religion in National Harmony from October 29th to November 1st in 1981 in Sri Lanka when the struggle of all of the untouchables and tribals in South Asia as a whole was studied in depth.

II. The Present situation of Christians of Scheduled Castes origin

It has already been mentioned that nearly 75% of the membership of the Church form the Christians of Scheduled Caste origin in our country. Even though Christianity entered India as early as 52 A.D. through the Apostle St. Thomas, according to hallowed tradition, the same tradition includes that the membership of the St. Thomas Christianity strictly confined itself to higher caste groups in the Southwestern coast of this country. Bishop Stephen Neil mentions in his book on 'History of Christian

Mission' that when Francis Xavier reached Cranganur about the year 1552 he learnt that there was about 1,00,000 member Christian community in Malabar coast all drawn from higher castes. The Bishop further says that only with the beginning of the Catholic mission in Goa region and later on in the Cape Comorin coastal region, the lower castes of fishermen folk were converted to the Gospel of Christ. However for the next 150 years, the successive Roman Catholic missionaries including Henry Henricus, Robert De Nobili, Beschi and others had been gaining converts both from the higher castes but mostly from the lower and outcaste groups in South India. Specifically through the influence of men like Robert De Nobili who took on Brahminical attire and attitudes seeking to be a missionary to the Brahmins, the Catholic Church was committed to the policy of maintaining caste distinctions even among the converts from the Hindu Society. Thus caste divisions within the Christian Church was recognised and legitimised both historically and theologically. But when by 1706 the German missionaries landed on the eastern shores of South India at Tranquebar, they already found the existence of the Catholic Church which had accepted the caste distinctions among its members. So much so even the first Church built at Tranquebar by Zeigenbalg as a Lutheran Protestant Church named New Jerusalem had a middle wall of partition through a railing that separated the sections for the higher caste converts and the other for the outcaste converts. These outcaste were drawn from those groups known as 'Scheduled Castes' since that phrase was used for the first time in the Government of India Act of 1935. It is the same people whom Gandhiji had unwittingly 'branded' as 'Harijans' by using a poetic expression borrowed from a Gujarati Vaishnavite writer who so described the orphans, the fatherless, and the destitutes. Ironically even the pietistic German missionaries who considered every believer and convert being made in the image of God with equal human dignity and rights with every other person had to yield to the observance of caste divisions following the Roman Catholic Church in South India. However Zeigenbalg was challenged by a fellow missionary called Benjamin Shultze who objected to the service of Holy Communion through separate cups for Harijan Christians at The New Jerusalem Church in Tranquebar and parted company from him to start a congregation of his own in Vepery in Madras. Thus began the protest against caste observance within the Church as early as in the first quarter of the 18th Century. At the close of that century came William Carey and his team to Bengal inaugurating what is known as the 'Modern Missionary Movement'. But the very fact that William Carey and others came as literateurs and Educators coming in first contact with the elitist Sanskrit culture, meant they were confronted with the caste culture of Hindu religion.

Almost 100 years after Carey or 200 years after the German Missionaries in the South or 350 years after the advent of the Roman Catholic Missionaries in Goa the famous Pandita Ramabai gives an insight into the state of Indian Christianity nearly 100 years ago in her book called the 'High caste Hindu women' published in the year 1888. Here is an extract from the book :

'In ancient times persons were assigned to each of the four castes according to their individual capacity and merit independent of the accident of birth'. Later on, when caste became an article of the Hindu faith it assumed the formidable proportions which now prevail everywhere in India. Transgressors of caste rules are from the highest to the lowest subject to excommunication and severe

punishment. Offenders by inter-marriage or change of faith are without redemption. It must also be borne in mind that if a Brahmin condescends to marry a person of lower caste (which Ramabai herself experienced), or eats or drinks with any of them, he is despised and shunned as an outcaste, not only by his own caste but also by the low caste with whose members he has entered into such relation. The low caste people will look down upon this Brahmin as a 'lawless wretch'. So deeply rooted is this custom in the heart of every orthodox Hindu that he is not in any way offended by the disrespect shown him by a high caste man, since he recognises in it only what is ordered by religion. For although 'caste' is confessedly an outgrowth of social order, it has now become the first great article of the Hindu creed all over India.

Thoughtful men like Buddha, Guru Nanak, Chaitanya and others rebelled against this tyrannical custom and proclaimed the gospel of social equality of all men but 'caste' proved too strong for them. Their disciples at the present day (the Buddhists, the Sikhs and the Reformed Hindu sects) are as much subject to caste as are any other orthodox Hindus. Even the Mohammedans have not escaped this tyrant; they too, are divided into several castes and are as strict as the Hindus in their observances. Over a million Hindu converts to Christianity, members of the Roman Catholic Church are more or less ruled by caste. The Protestant Missionaries likewise found it difficult in early days to overcome caste prejudice among their converts and not many years ago in the Madras Presidency Clergymen were compelled to use different cups for each separate caste when they celebrated the 'Lord's Supper' (quoted by S. M. Adhav in his biography of Pandita Ramabai, pages 92 to 93, CISRS and CLS Madras 1979).

Now almost 100 years after Ramabai's description of the Indian Church, the condition cannot be said to have changed very much. Most sadly even within the World renowned and forward looking Church of South India there still exist the caste ridden vestiges from our Hindu heritage. I have recently learnt to my deep pain and shock that specifically in four out of our twenty-one dioceses, two in Kerala and two in Tamil Nadu, separate worshipping centres or Churches are being used for separate congregations in the same locality within the distance of a furlong or two. The implication is obvious that the attitudes of caste divisions in Christian people seem to be not at all different from those of the orthodox Hindus in our Society.

The document 'Samata' (1981/2 issue) carries an article of Rev. Dr. Abraham Ayrookuzhial presented at the URM Consultation in Sri Lanka in November 1981. The author refers to the reports from another CISRS consultation in Bangalore when case studies on the struggles of untouchables or outcaste Christians in their local Church life, one at Sawyarpuram near Tuticorin and another in Wynad in Kerala, in both cases, the higher caste groups of Christians are identified as openly dominating and oppressing and exploiting the out caste untouchable background community of fellow Christians in the same local congregations. 'But the Church which includes both the oppressor and the oppressed sections of the congregation happily continues to function by catering to the 'spiritual' needs of the congregation steering clear of the mundane but utterly basic human problems that have long ago killed the spirit of fellowship and unity among its members. Things like empowerment of people through non-formal education and organising the masses for self-improvement

are unheard of in the local Church and even considered as sacrilege. In fact the rich, the educated and elitist section of the local Christian community tend to control and shape the institutional Church in its own style of Church growth and mission using the institutional power for winning souls. The Church prefers to remain unattached to the profane realities around her. It turns within itself to keep the status-quo and position in the society rather than responding to the prophetic role the Church has to play in building up of a more human and just society. Not only that, worst of all is that both the oppressed and the oppressors approve of the present functioning of the Church and none of them accept or approve the Church of a different mode of functioning. The studies from other parts of South India also describe the role of the Church with such words as 'spectator', 'passive' accommodating structures of power outside because of its minority position 'strengthening or maintaining caste divisions' of untouchables in their origin.

Thus it is quite clear the Christians of Scheduled Caste origin are discriminated against and oppressed by the fellow Christians within the Church for no fault of their own, but the accident of birth, even when they are 2nd, 3rd or 4th generation Christians. The Christians of higher caste background who are in the minority in the Church carry their caste prejudice even to the 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th generations as a part and parcel of their birth-right and heritage from the Hindu background, unaffected by the Christian belief and practice. Ironically, even the oppressed outcaste Christians of scheduled castes origin carry their inferiority complex resignedly accepting their inherited servility from the Hindu background having internalised the legitimising myths and beliefs in 'fate and Karma' that domesticate them into a 'culture of silenced'.

Thus the problem with the Christians of Scheduled Caste origin is not only that they are discriminated against and looked down upon by their own fellow Christians but they themselves have acquiesced to their subordinate and servile status in society, even within the Church society. Perhaps such was the condition of the people whom Jesus described as 'Sheep without the Shepherd' (Mark: 6-4) and as people not knowing the difference between the right hand and the left.

Yet another serious problem with the Christians of Scheduled caste origin is that they are divided among themselves into different subsects even as their parent community called the Scheduled Castes or untouchables are divided into hundreds of 'Upajatis'. They observe caste discrimination against one another equally strongly if not more as the so called upper caste. It is a classical example of the oppressed being ruled by the values of the oppressor. Thus for instance it is a sad spectacle to see the Christians of Andhra Pradesh mostly drawn from the Scheduled castes polarised into subcastes of Malas and Madhikas. Further the Christians of Scheduled Caste origin are like the people whom Jesus described in the Gospel (Mark: 6-4) as Sheep without a Shepherd and also as people not knowing the difference between their right hand and the left. This condition of lack of self awareness and self-discrimination does not mean they lack intelligence or brain power. It only means that they were left with the need for developing leaders and leadership skills among them.

III. The plight of the outcaste untouchables today

The above described condition of the Christians of Scheduled Caste origin is nothing but the exact mirroring of the plight of the schedule caste groups at large in the

Hindu Society. Rabindranath Tagore had described the caste system as 'a gigantic system of cold blooded repression' and was of the opinion that regeneration of the Indian people directly and perhaps solely depended upon its removal. But how did this society degenerate to that level? And, is it ever possible to remove this repressive caste system?

Having been left to stew in their own juice for some 3000 years by the Hindu graded allocation of hierarchical roles by the so-called 'Manu Neethi' system called 'Varanashrama-Dharma' the so-called Scheduled Castes were really not allowed to participate in the total life of the four castes at all. They were the original inhabitants of this land before the Aryan invasion belonging to the Dravidian or even Pre or Adi Dravidian race. Thus these people were never a part and parcel of and had nothing to do with the Hindu fold or Hindu religion. In the course of History they became assimilated into the graded Hindu society as the fifth caste or as 'the Panchamas'. In the process the fourth caste called the Sudhras who were the servant class, were happy to accommodate these original sons of the soil as their servant class thus relegating the people of this land as slaves of the servant class, in the Hindu graded society.

This kind of social organisation and role assignment was made Sacro-sanct by religious sanction secured by theological assertion. The Aryan Brahminical explanation that God is the source of the human family could not be resisted by the truly human original people of this land. It was said the Brahmin came from the head of Brahma the Kshatriyas came from his body, the Vysyas from his thighs and the Sudhras came from his feet. But very subtly and deceptively the fifth section of the population were left out as having nothing to do with God as their source but were identified as Rakshashas like Ravana in the Epic of Ramayana. That fifth class was deceived into believing as people outside the pale of Indian society, as outcastes and as 'Milechas' and as untouchables. They were further deceived into the belief that because of 'fate and Karma' any one is born into one of these five caste groups. Only determined by fate and Karma through a series of reincarnations and cycles of rebirth can any one improve his status. But certainly there is no hope for any one to move from one caste to the other upwards or downwards within this single birth in which he finds himself.

Thus it is by these religious beliefs Indian man is imprisoned in the caste culture of Hindu society entangled in such a stranglehold of Hindu beliefs of religious web. Even the Christian man whether of high caste or outcaste finds it impossible to extricate himself into the freedom of the Christian belief to call God as Our Father and take his place as a child in fellowship with other children in the same Father's house.

Sociologists have identified three basic human faculties as being inalienable rights of every human being. These are:

1. Man's capacity to reflect.
2. Man's capacity to love and to make associations.
3. Man's capacity to make decisions.

When it comes to the Scheduled Caste man in our country today, it is clear, he does not have the freedom to exercise any of these three innate faculties. These basic human rights are denied to him by the historical and religious role assignment in which he is caught in the Hindu society. But more particularly is the capacity to love which includes self-love given is denied to him since he is not recognised as coming from God who that His image

to all men. Hindu caste culture does not recognise this human dignity of the outcaste man and so he is deprived of self dignity and self-love since he is considered to be a means of pollution and treated as an untouchable. So he not only has no love for himself but is ashamed of identifying himself with another person who is likewise deprived of self dignity. He surely finds it difficult to associate himself or identify himself with the so called Scheduled Caste person or persons. Certainly he faces an identity crisis. He is ashamed to say that he belongs with the other Scheduled Castes. How can we expect him when he has some how extricated himself either by conversion or reservation benefits to take up leadership role to change the lot of his own people with no sense of belonging to them?

It is found today that after 35 years of independence only two million people of Scheduled Caste origin have come up in their life through employment with the Government through reservation and other benefits and thus changed their status in life. But they are blamed for not helping their own people who number about 200 million people including Scheduled Castes and schedule tribes. How could they be blamed since they are made to be ashamed of belonging to this community and are denied the faculty of self-love or making association even with their own people.

Writing in the Bi-monthly magazine called *Dalit Voice* (Jan. 1-15, 1984), the General Secretary Mr. K. Veeramani of Dravida Kazhagam explains the origin and goals of his movement: 'It is the considered finding of the Dravidar Kazhagam that the people other than Brahmins have been subjected to social degradation and ignominy due to the Aryan (Brahminical) influence on their social, cultural and literary fields. The caste system is the root cause for the malady of the majority of the people and so Periyar (E. V. Ramaswamy) devoted much of his time towards its total abolition. To completely smash this pattern of social structure, Periyar founded the Dravidar Kazhagam with its historical derivative. We are strictly following the footprints of Periyar.

'The Brahmins from the Puranic age down to the modern age have been setting one caste or community against another, following their 'divide and rule' policy and they have been so far successful in their attempts as the disunity created by them among the non-brahmins has brought to them rich dividends to continue their exploitation. We look upon the Dravidian people as a whole and not in terms of particular caste or community. The venom of prejudices and hatred of caste injected into the veins of the non-Brahmins by the Brahmins for ages are still dominant in their minds. Unless and until these venoms are syringed out from the veins of the people and a new blood is injected into them, the caste divisions among the people would continue.'

Mr. K. Veeramani was here concerned with the serious divisions and mutual fightings among the lower caste-groups and particularly their hatred and oppression of the outcastes (untouchables) described now a days as the *Dalits*. This recent phenomenon of terrible repression and unleashing of atrocities against the outcastes (Harijans and Girijans) by the lower caste groups, mainly the so-called Backward Classes of Shudra castes is what a being explained by Mr. Veeramani. Whatever the explanation the fact remains the age-old victims of injustice and oppression are being further subjected to untold misery and violence that are daily occurrences in some part of the other of this country as reported in the newspapers.

The outcaste innocent children are kidnapped and killed in groups; women are raped, not infrequently, by the police who are to give protection to them; youth and adult men who try to assert their human dignity are falsely accused and beaten up and assaulted and lynched by better educated propertied and land owning higher caste people in the villages. But worse still is what the urban educated richer classes are doing against the Dalits, who try to demand their basic rights and human dignity. The caste war in Gujarat started over the reservations in Medical College admissions; the massacred in Marathwada; the repeated criminal terrorising Koondaism in Bihar; the tragic killings of outcastes in Bhibandi; in Meerut, in Mirzapur, and in South India, the tragedy of over 40 people being burnt alive inside their hutments in Kilvenmani, (near Tanjore in Tamil Nadu); the Villipuram massacres, etc., etc.,—all within the past few years are but a few instances of virtual last ditch battle the caste demons seem to be making to eliminate and eradicate a whole people of some 200 millions as untouchables and unseeables. But all this take place as a response and reaction to the revolt from the long-oppressed people of outcastes. The revolt that began with great social thinkers like the Buddha, Guru Nanak and Chaitanya in earlier times, was recently being reinforced by Mahatma Jotirao Phoolley, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker. They found that the ideology of social equality preached by the liberal Hindu reformers like Ranade, Tilak, Gandhi, and others would not change the status of the untouchables because caste is a religious value for the Hindus and not merely a socio-economic institution. They felt that the image of an untouchable as a religiously impure person had to be fought if he is to be socially emancipated. Thus within the Hindu religious framework it is impossible to redeem the human dignity of the outcastes.

Describing the plight of the untouchables over 40 years ago, the greatest Indian after Buddha (as V. T. Rajasekar—Editor of *Dalit Voice* calls him), Dr. B.R. Ambedkar said: 'The Romans had their slaves, the Spartans their helots the British their Villains, the Americans their Negroes, the Germans their Jews; so the Hindus their untouchables. But none of these can be said to have called upon to face a fate which is worse than the fate which pursues the untouchables. Slavery, serfdom, villainage, all have vanished. But untouchability still exists and bids fair to last as long as Hinduism will last.' (p. 11, '*Mr. Gandhi and the Emancipation of the untouchables*'. Bhim Patrika publications, Jullunder, India (1943).

Can the situation really be changed? Gandhiji spent a whole life time fighting against *untouchability* but never wanted *caste-system* that mothered it changed at all. Indian Parliament legislated against *untouchability* making it a crime but *this* paper tiger is daily challenged by the caste groups of people. Their attitudes toward their fellow citizens is not changed. But only hatred and prejudice are added by the legal provisions like Civil Rights Act and Reservations and concessions for this deprived and depraved outcaste people.

A most serious plight of this vast section of outcaste people is their lack of literacy. The 1981 census claims 36.17% literacy rate all over the country. But it would be less than 20% among this rural-based landless, casual labour class mass of people living in their segregates 'colonies' away from the main village on land site that is not their own, in unhygienic mud-hutments.

At present about 52% of India's population or some 363 millions are counted as living below the poverty line, that each earning a monthly income of Rs. 86 only. But the 200 odd million outcastes people belong to the lowest rung of the ladder and so are living far, far below the subsistence level, virtually living on a single, inadequate meal a day—mostly depending on the doles from others—with no work opportunities. Since such was their plight for ages, the Indian society seem to take it for granted even as the sufferers themselves have taken it with utter inertia, apathy and resignation.

IV. Church's response to concerns of Christians of Scheduled Castes origin (CSCO)

In this section of the paper I would merely list out the issues and concerns of the CSCO that had been indicated in the course of the brief descriptions of the plight both the Christian and non-Christian peoples of Scheduled castes as outlined above. As was pointed out the condition of the CSCO only mirrors that of all outcastes and therefore the issues and concerns are the same for both.

- (1) The existence of a people branded and bundled up as being outside the pale of Indian society is a peculiar and *specific social phenomenon* in all the world. This include as many as 200 millions out of the total of 750 millions, even the Constitution of the nation identifying them separately as the *Scheduled castes* (Harijans) and as the *Scheduled Tribes* (Gurijans) and are thus recognised as having been long subjected to social oppression and therefore eligible to certain handicap benefits for their *self development*.
- (2) Implied in such separate *identity* is the recognition of certain dehumanising debilities like *untouchability* social degradation with no possibility of *social mobility* for upward status gaining limited by (Hindu) religious dogma. In fact, this rejects a *doctrine of man* as being *not equal* and *social organization* being *graded and hierarchical*. Thus the destiny both of man as individual and *society* as a whole viewed as determined by extraneous forces of Fate and Karma, and *not* by man and society by themselves as the *socialistic, democratic, secular* Constitution of this same country had assumed.
- (3) A third issue that emerges is the total denial of *human dignity* and *self respect* for a vast population in their own native land. This really means denial of basic freedom and human rights to life, property and pursuit of happiness to almost one third of this nation's peoples.
- (4) Yet another serious issue involved is 'the culture of silence' due to generations of exploitation and oppression resulting in domestication of the 'Scheduled' castes and tribes, so much deprived and depraved in their human spirit and psychological personality which leads them to resignation to their plight accepting it all as unchangeable and in fact legitimizing their own existence through internalising the myths and beliefs foisted on them by the *dominant culture* that oppressed them for thousands of years.
- (5) But worst of all is the issue that the cumulative effect of all the social manipulations involving this vast population including the Constitutional guarantees given them by the State is that they are further pushed into a state of hopelessness with no clear vision of their total liberation and integration into the total society.

This arises out of not attending to the root causes of their social alienation but only scratching the problem of caste-culture with its socio-economic and political ramifications by attempts at removing untouchability and providing props like reservations and concessions.

Having noted only the major issues involved, let us seek to identify some of the major concerns of the Scheduled Castes people of this land.

Just to list a few of these concerns we may mention the following:

1. *Their state of dependency*: The grinding poverty and illiteracy in which all the outcastes are immersed in, raises the big question, how to redeem this great mass of people from their impossible plight? They own *no land* and have *no job* opportunities to earn their living. They are made thus to be a *permanently dependent community* on the doles and charities from the society and the Government. Thus *no* basic solution for the problems of out-castes in this land has even been made. They are nowhere near becoming a *self reliant* community. They are a '*no people*' and God knows how can these people be made or organised into '*a people*' with a self respect and self awareness of their selfhood.

2. *Their lack of Self Respect*: The second most serious concern about the outcastes is *their own lack of self understanding and self respect* for themselves as part of the human family. This is a matter of the spirit, for 'man shall not live by bread alone'. It was this plight of the South Indian masses that E. V. Ramasamy Periyar, the great Social Reformer had identified and agonised over and started his 'self respect' movement to restore 'the man in man'. Giving an oration at the funeral of this 'father of the oppressed' a former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Mr. Karunanidhi raised the question, what was the contribution of 'Thanthai Periyar' over 50 years of his fight for the down-trodden masses? To illustrate his point Mr. Karunanidhi described a prison-scene during the British Raj. As usual all the prisoners in a jail were kept naked and half starved. On a festival day they were permitted to be given an undercloth and a good meal by any philanthropist. What would such prisoners do when both food and cloth were offered simultaneously. Most of them would rush out of their dingy dark rooms and grab the food, fighting like dogs. Very few cared to pick up the cloth and cover their shame. Such also was the condition of the down-trodden masses in South India before Periyar came on the scene. It was Periyar who helped lift the self-consciousness and self respect of the masses since they had sunk into animal level of living. For Periyar believed, Mr. Karunanidhi said, 'man shall not live by bread alone'. More than food, man needed self-dignity and self-esteem. Periyar and all his followers therefore were fighting for this basic liberation of the masses. Now when Jesus Christ declared that 'Man shall not live by bread alone' did He not call attention to the need of every man and woman being raised to the self-understanding of his or her own self-dignity and worth given by the Creator. And is not this Christ still relevant to India?

However, E. V. Ramasamy himself came from the Sudhra caste groups and he and his followers concentrated on working for the liberation of the Sudhra section of the population, thus by and large neglecting this outcastes people. As mentioned earlier, the Brahmins also through their policy of 'divide and rule' had sent a wedge between these two peoples to break this movement.

3. *Their lack of Leadership*: Lack of leadership from their own ranks is the other most serious concern

With the *outcastes* in India. Until the emergence of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar from the 'Mahar' outcastes of Maharashtra in the decades before Independence, there were, in all history, no leaders at all from this people. Even the earlier champions of outcastes from the great Buddha downwards to the E.V.R. of Tamil Nadu, all the leaders who fought to *liberate* these masses were from the other—mostly upper caste groups. You see it takes a Hebrew Moses to help liberate the oppressed Hebrew people and a Black Negro Martin Luther King to help liberate the fellow American Black people. By the very mandate of the Creator, who has given the freedom of will to man, man has to work out his own salvation, of course with God working with Man (Phil. 2).

V. Church's response to the issues and concerns of the outcastes

As pointed out earlier the *problems* and *prospects* for the liberation of the Christians of Scheduled Castes origin are much the same as with the *outcastes* (both Harijans and Girijans) outside the Christian fold, since both the sections suffer and share the same plight of *caste oppression*.

However, the Church in India which is a tiny minority of about 20 million people with 75% of its membership being *outcastes* has perhaps to follow the ancient wisdom of 'Charity begins at home'. But it must only begin and not end at home.

It must be recognised that the Christians of outcastes background actually suffer a double injustice.

Double Injustice: While the Government of the land discriminates again the Christians of Scheduled Castes origin based on religion, ironically the Christians drawn from the *higher caste groups* into the Church, though a minority themselves, they discriminate, exploit and oppress and take advantage over the poor outcastes—all based on *caste superiority* which is not earned by them but merely an accident by birth. Deprived and dispossessed of all property and land, serving as *slaves* and *labourers* for the higher caste groups of masters, whether Hindus or Christians, who somehow own and manage their inherited and mostly *unearned* properties and wealth. Outcastes people work hard and sweat their blood to provide easy and soft living for the caste people but are further deprived and de-humanised. Devoid of human dignity and self respect these social outcastes people have lost even the will to fight, let alone gaining initiative to liberate themselves.

Therefore the God of the Bible who takes deliberately the side with the poor and the oppressed has given the mandate through Christ the Lord of the Church when He spelt out the purpose and goals of His Mission, which is also to be the Mission of the Church, when He read the *Manifesto of God's Mission*, at the Nazareth Synagogue (Luke 4:18-21). The same mandate was reiterated in His parable of the Last Judgement (Math. 25:35-45) and insisted that 'whatever you do unto the least of My brethren you have done unto Me'.

I had earlier said that charity must begin at home. Indeed both *historically* and theologically such a course of action for the Church is abundantly *justified*.

In the Old Testament, the Law of Moses is not shy of stipulating that 'If in any of the towns in the land that the Lord has given you there is a fellow-Israelite in need then do not be selfish and refuse to help him' (Deut. 15:7; also read Levit 25:35).

Nor is the New Testament ashamed to acknowledge the need to help one's fellow Christians in need. In fact there are specific instructions on this. At one place (Luke 12:42) Jesus Himself asks, 'who then is that faithful and wise steward who his Lord shall make ruler over His household to give them their portion of meal in due season?' *Sharing the resources* within the household is commended thus by our Lord as being faithful and wise stewardship. St. Paul had spared no opportunity to make collection of funds from fellow Christians of Macedonia and Achaia to help the poor Christian: of Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26) (II Cor. 9:1) He did not think it is being selfish or communal minded to care for the poor within the Church (Gal. 2:10). In fact He insisted saying 'Let us do good unto all men especially unto them who are of the household of God' (Gal. 6:10). He makes it clear therefore that it is the duty and responsibility of fellow Christians to support and help the poorer and the oppressed and victimised among them. And St. James that first Bishop of Jerusalem also confirmed this Christian duty in his Epistle (James 2:15,16 and Ch. 1:26).

VACANCY FOR POST OF MANAGER

Christian with experience in Business administration, Finance and Property Management and familiar with Company Law, Income Tax and Land Acts, etc., are invited to apply for the above post.

Age : Between 40 and 60 years

Pay : Minimum Rs. 1,500/- per mensem
other allowances negotiable.

Applications to be marked "CONFIDENTIAL" and sent by September 10, 1984 at the latest to :

MR. JOHN VERGHESE

Hon. Secretary & Treasurer,

CSI TRUST ASSOCIATION,

CSI SYNOD SECRETARIAT,

P. Box No. 4906,

MADRAS-600 086.

FATHER LIKE AS TO ABRAHAM*

The death of our beloved brother G. D. Pandian comes to us as a rude shock and we have assembled here dazed, shocked and deeply grieved. I was one of those who silently admired and adored Mr. Pandian. His life was a truly dedicated and committed life. It would be the truth to say that it will take a long time before we find another Mr. Pandian. He was a man with sterling qualities and unshakable faith. He will always stand as a model of faith to us and so can be compared with Abraham.

Pandian the Man of Faith

Like Abraham Pandian had his faith firmly anchored in Jesus Christ. He always carried with him Christ and a quiet demonstration of Christlikeness. His faith in God was amazing and he did his work in the Synod not as an officer but as a man of faith and his faith was counted as righteousness.

Pandian who sacrificed an Isaac

I was in their home when their son met with an accident and I was amazed to see the tranquility, calmness when he lost his son in a motor-cycle accident. If I was in his place, I would have certainly reacted differently. His

calmness, serenity and courage was a great source of Christian witness not only to the non-Christian neighbourhood but also to the Christian church. I sometimes wondered why he did not give expressions to his feelings but the answer came back that he was Abraham who was prepared to offer his Isaac.

Pandian A Man of Stature

I have always imagined Abraham as tall, well built, pleasant faced (of course bearded) and with a countenance that demonstrated his Godliness. Pandian was a man not only of physical stature but always conveying himself with dignity and poise. This communicated something more than the physical personality. It communicated the spiritual stature of the man. He was a spiritual giant.

Today we mourn, we tear, we grieve with much pain and sorrow but today is also a day to thank God for a noble son in Israel, for a Christ like character and for an Abraham in this generation.

SUNDAR CLARKE,
Bishop-in-Madras.

* Sermon preached at the funeral service of Mr. G. D. Pandian.

G. D. PANDIAN PASSES AWAY



With a deep sense of shock we inform our readers the sudden death of Mr. G. D. Pandian, Manager, C.S.I.T.A. He passed away on 25th July 1984 at Bangalore while he was on an official visit. As we offer our sympathy to his family in their bereavement. We add our tribute for those many years of his service and gratitude for all what he did for the C.S.I.A.

—Editor.

NEWS from the DIOCESES

DORNAKAL DIOCESE

Ordination Service

On Friday the 29th June 1984 (St. Peter's Day) at 8.00 A.M. an Ordination Service was conducted by the Rt. Rev. G. S. Luke, the Bishop. Nearly 25 clergymen assisted in the Service. The Cathedral was fully packed with the relatives, friends of the Ordinands and the local congregation members.

One Deacon and Five Presbyters were ordained for the full-time Ministry in the Diocese. The high-lights of this Sacred Service on that day was, one lady Deacon Miss Elenora Abraham, an old student of U.T.C., Bangalore, was ordained as Presbyter. She is the first woman to be ordained as Deacon and Presbyter in Dornakal Diocese. After, all the trials, and oppositions in the past, in many quarters in the Diocese, our Ministerial Committee, the Executive Committee and the Bishop took a bold step to give full ordination to women in the Diocese. By this experience, the women as a whole are not only given equal rights in the secular life, but also in the life of the Sacred Ministry too. They have now equal responsibility to fulfil as Co-workers even in ordained ministry.

Another important thing which took place in the Ordination Service was that a Lady Ministry from Bacchus Marsh Parish in Victoria, from the Uniting Church in Australia, Rev. (Miss) Roselind Terry, was the Preacher in the Service. She gave Charge to the newly ordained Deacon and Presbyters, which was a very inspiring message. The entire service was solemn and historic. We praise God for His wonderful acts and works upon His choosen. I request the readers to continue to pray for these newly ordained fellow-workers in the Sacred Ministry.

REV. K. SURYA KANTHA RAO

DORNAKAL DIOCESE CLERGY RETREAT

For the first time in the history of the Diocese of Dornakal all the Clergy, 56 in number, in two batches, left the boundaries of the Diocese for Retreat, Conference, Reflections and for equipping for the mission of the church. Forty Presbyters went to the Ecumenical Christian Centre, Whitefield and spent three days in Retreat-Conference on the theme Renewal for the mission. Resource persons who spoke on the theme were : the Rt. Rev. G.S. Luke ; Dr. K.C. Abraham ; Dr. J. Oliver and Mr. K.S. Azariah. The clergy had a very rewarding experience which equipped them a new for the several ministries in the Diocese.

Another batch of the clergy went to Madras and stayed at the Community Service Centre for a retreat. Church as an agent for Development—was the theme of the retreat.

The first batch from Whitefield went to Madras to spend two days in Dhyana Ashram at the invitation of the CASA for an exposure for the ministry of CASA. Rev. Dass Babu, Director, Communications Department spoke once to the clergy in Dhyana Ashram. Dr. J. Oliver was responsible for all the arrangements which was gratefully acknowledged by the diocese.

—K. S. AZARIAH,
Secretary of the Diocese.

DORNAKAL DIOCESE

New Building of St. Andrew's High School, Kothagudem.

Bishop G. S. Luke dedicated the newly constructed building of the School on 22nd July, 1984.

St. Andrew's High School was established in the year 1935, with the generous help of the Protestant Episcopal Church, U.S.A., for construction of small school buildings, as a primary school, and it has now grown to be a full-fledged high school. The school is being run without adequate accommodation although it was upgraded into a full-fledged high school in the same and poor type of tiled quarters. Later on, as every one of us know we have added two classrooms by taking a loan of Rs. 36,824.19 from the Diocese, in anticipation of help from abroad. Later on it was felt necessary to have permanent buildings as the students number was increasing, and to meet the growing needs in this historical town. At this juncture the Diocese has prayerfully made fervent appeal to the authorities of the Protestant Episcopal Church New York, through Working Committee of the Synod of the Church of South India.

The Protestant Episcopal Church out of its funds from Uniting Thank Offering, at the recommendation of the Working Committee of the C.S.I. Synod, sanctioned \$ 45000.00 which is equivalent in Indian currency to Rs. 4,45,103.85. But later on our Consulting Engineers discouraged us from the asbestos sheet roofing to reinforced concrete building on permanent measures, and designed for 10 class rooms and 3 administrative blocks into ground and 1st floors which includes furniture etc., at a cost of Rs. 14 lakhs, taking into consideration the present rate of costs in the market.

I am deeply indebted to the Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, New York, for this kind gesture, and my thanks are due to him. Miss Judith M. Gillespie, the former co-ordinator of the U.T.O. who has helped us in our endeavour, shall also need to be mentioned and our thanks are due to her. I also extend my heartfelt regards to Miss Willeen Smith, the new Secretary for her assurance given to consider a further grant if we process our request through the Synod.

I thank our Thandrigaru, who has kindly consented to dedicate this building for God's Glory. But for his support and concern this project would not have come up. I thank Mr. P. D. Prasada Rao, Deputy Chief Engineer, Government of Andhra Pradesh, who laid the corner stone of the building. Had I not been encouraged by our Diocesan Secretary, Mr. K. S. Azariah, this project would not have been seen by us today here. My special thanks are due to him. I also extend my deepfelt thanks to the elders and leaders of Kothagudam congregation, without whose help I might not have done this mammoth work- and last but never the least the co-operation, and super vision of the Headmaster and staff of St. Andrew's High School to be applauded.

M. EDWIN RAO,
Diocesan Treasurer.

MEDAK DIOCESE

THE REV. ERNEST W. GALLAGHER
A Tribute by Norman W. Taggart

The Rev. Ernest William Gallagher, B.A., B.D., was born in Kinsale, Co Cork, on August 24, 1918. He died in the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, on February 21. He was educated at the Masonic Boys' School, Dublin, from 1929 to 1936; Trinity College, Dublin, from 1936 to 1940; and Edgehill Theological College, Belfast, from 1940 to 1943. While at Trinity he received a First Class Honours Degree and a Gold Medal, in Philosophy.

He was appointed to the Hyderabad District, India, by the Methodist Missionary Society in 1944 and was ordained there in 1946. When part of this area became the Medak Diocese in the United Church of South India, in 1947, Mr. Gallagher continued to serve as a presbyter until 1966. He held many responsible positions, and became a fluent speaker in the local language, Telugu.

Upon his return to Ireland he served in Dublin as super-intendent at Charleston Road Methodist Church from 1967 to 1975, and at the Centenary Methodist Church from 1975 to 1982. In 1982 he was appointed principal of Edgehill Theological College, Belfast and Director of Christian Education of the Methodist Church.

Mr. Gallagher was appointed President of the Methodist Church in Ireland in 1981. Among the many offices he held he was a former Chairman of the Dublin District and a former General Secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society (Ireland).

Arising from deep theological conviction and also his experience of union in the missionary situation in India,

Mr. Gallagher was keenly committed to ecumenical affairs playing a leading part in the Irish School of Ecumenic, in Dublin and the unofficial annual inter-Church talks at Greenhills in Drogheda. More recently, he became the Methodist patron of the Columbanus Community of Reconciliation, based in Belfast.

Married in South India to Muriel Hyman, who was herself serving as a missionary, he survived by her and, their children David, John, Janet and Ruth.

The funeral service took place at University Road Methodist church, Belfast, on Thursday. A service of thanksgiving was held in the Centenary Church, Lesson Park, Dublin, on Saturday.

Norman W. Taggart writes: It is a great honour to pay this tribute to Ernest. I do so as a friend, having known him well since 1962 when I went to India. In India, Ireland and Britain we have since kept in close touch, sharing Methodist and much wider concerns, and meeting whenever possible to discuss such topics as anti-apartheid, nuclear disarmament and Christian responsibility in Ireland I can think of no one major personal decision which I have had to take on which I did not seek his advice, given an opportunity. He was a great man and an outstanding Christian.

Ernest's early years were dominated by uncertainty due to his father's serious illness and premature death. How difficult it must have been for his mother in Kinsale, with three young sons still dependent on her.

Ernest Gallagher was an outstanding missionary. That needs to be affirmed since Ernest himself played down what he did in India in his effort to resist any tendency to romanticise overseas work. His fluency in the Telugu language was exceptional and was acquired through early years spent as a single missionary in remote villages. This, linguistic skill, when added to his many personal qualities was the key to the unique relationships he built and maintained with so many people in India. He was trusted to a remarkable degree by nationals and expatriates alike. This was a notable achievement when one recalls that he lived through the post-independent period in India, at a time when, quite properly, the emphasis fell on Indianisation with the Church. He was a great servant of the Church, often fulfilling the demanding role of being a go-between, interpreting one group to another and creating trust.

At one time Ernest was appointed as the first non-episcopally ordained minister to a former Anglican congregation in the city of Secunderabad. A significant minority in the congregation had earlier strenuously resisted the movement towards church union, even going to the lengths of taking their opposition to the civil court. Ernest quietly accepted the situation, allowing aspects of his ministry to be 'covered' by having a retired bishop in attendance at some of his services. He did not force himself on anyone, but bided his time and soon won the hearts of the people.

His work in training evangelists, in attending to financial and property matters, and also in educational affairs (often in support of Muriel's initiatives in this field), were all vitally important in the life of the Church.

Ernest and Muriel were ideally suited, having much in common and in other ways complementing each other.

(contd. on page 24)



front Row from left to right :

Bishop Caleb, CNI; Bishop Zacharias Mar Theophilus, MTC; Bishop Sundar Clarke, C.S.I.; Mr. Henry Devadas, CNI; The Rev. M. Azariah, General Secretary, C.S.I. is seen in the last row.

The Commission on Justice and Peace of the Joint Council of the Church of North India, The Church of South India and the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church, at its meeting held on June 25-27, 1984 at the Ecumenical Christian Centre, Whitefield, Bangalore, adopted Statements and Recommendations on the following issues for the consideration and necessary action of the Joint Council :

- (i) the Punjab situation.
- (ii) Peace and the Nuclear Threat.
- (iii) Socio-Economic Political Issues.
- (iv) Indian Christian Marriage Act 1872.
- (v) The Indian Divorce Act 1869.
- (vi) Inter Faith Marriages.
- (vii) Alcoholism and Drug Addiction.
- (viii) Caste Issues.
- (ix) Anti-Dowry Amendment Bill.
- (x) Dowry.
- (xi) The Role of Institutions and Development Projects run by the Churches in promoting the cause of Justice to the Poor and Downtrodden.

MEMBERS PRESENT

- CNI : 1. The Rt. Rev. Maqbul Caleb
2. Dr. T. S. Wilkinson
3. Mr. V. Henry Devadas (*Convener*)
- CSI : 4. Rt. Rev. Dr. Sundar Clarke
(*Deputy Moderator*)
5. The Rev. M. Azariah
(*General Secretary*)
6. The Rev. Dass Babu
(*Editor, Churchman*)

MTC :

7. Bishop Zachariah Mar Theophilus
8. The Very Revd. A. A. Pylee
(*Vicar General*)
9. The Rev. R. C. Thomas

SPECIAL INVITEES

10. Dr. K. C. Abraham
11. Rev. Ebenezer Immanuel
12. Mr. J. V. Koilpillai
13. Rev. (Mrs.) Florence Deenadayalan
14. Mrs. Marian Chacko
15. Rev. Lawrence

NEW WCC GENERAL SECRETARY

EMILIO Castro, 57, a Methodist minister from Uruguay has been chosen as the fourth General Secretary of the WCC. He succeeds **Philip Potter**, 62, a Methodist Minister from Dominica who has served the world church with distinction during the past twelve years. Castro will begin his five-year term next year. 1973-83 he was director of WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism.

Though more soft-spoken than his predecessor, Castro is equally committed to social justice, says **Time** magazine (23/7), and quotes him as saying recently that neither Marxism nor capitalism can properly be called Christian. At the centre of one is 'materialist affirmation', at the other the 'profit motive'. Referring to liberation theology, he said that 'liberation in the sense of a passion for the marginal, the outcast, the periphery, is a central dimension of all my preaching and writing'. He favours a pacifist

approach to combatting poverty and oppression, according to the magazine, which goes on to quote him as saying, 'Nonetheless, I do not judge those who fight with different methods.'

The Time report also contains the following personal and intimate details about the life of the new ecumenical leader: Born as one of nine children in a Roman Catholic family in Montevideo, as a youth Castro played with children from a nearby Methodist Church. Says Castro: 'I ultimately found Jesus Christ through my personal contacts. It was not a church-to-church conversion.'

South India Churchman congreulates and assures Emilio Castro of its prayers and good wishers.

POPE JOHN PAUL II VISITS WCC

FIFTEEN years after the visit of Paul VI, another Pope, John Paul II, has visited the World Council of Churches. With high security precautions around the Ecumenical Centre, the Pope shared in the Pentecost worship service of the WCC. Metropolitan Emilianos (representative of Ecumenical Patriarchate), Mimi Marga Buhrig (a President of the WCC), John Paul II, Philip Potter, Rev. Joachim Held (moderator of the WCC Central Committee) and Mrs. Sylvia Talbot (its vice-moderator) conducted different parts of the Service.

The Addresses by the WCC General Secretary, Philip Potter, and Pope John Paul II stressed the importance of the discussions and projects undertaken jointly by the Vatican and the WCC. The Pope clearly affirmed that for the Roman Catholic Church 'the ecumenical movement is irreversible'. He did, however, insist on the role of the Bishop of Rome, 'the visible pole and guarantee of Unity', 'To be', he added, 'in communion with the bishop of Rome is to give visible evidence that one is in communion with all who confess the faith of the apostles'. That is the classic Roman Catholic position. For the Reformed, it is not only 'a difficulty', as John Paul II described it, but rather an obstacle in the way of unity.

Philip Potter, in his address, described 'the unity we seek as a conciliar fellowship of local churches which have their being in God'. In short, expressions of friendship and joint activities between the WCC and the Vatican, but no drawing closer in the field of doctrine.

After the service Philip Potter and John Paul II, followed by some 50 WCC officials and representatives of other organizations who have their offices in the Ecumenical Centre (World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Lutheran World Federation, Conference of European Churches) met privately in closed session in the Conference Hall next to the chapel. Issues dealt with in this conversation included ecclesiological questions, ecumenical formation, the issue of solidarity with the poor and oppressed, and common witness. The general impression given is of an open and warm exchange of views.

At the end of the closed session and before the Pope left the Ecumenical Centre, a Joint Statement by Philip Potter and Cardinal Willebrands, President of the secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity of the Roman Catholic Church, was distributed to the press and all present. This statement is the fruit of preliminary long discussions and is an expression of what its two signatories can jointly affirm at the present time. The statement

does not contain any particularly new elements, and ends with the words:

We are brothers and sisters in Christ who has given us the gift of new life for the glory of God. Today's meeting expresses something of what links us together in a common calling and of our responsibility towards each other as members of Christ. May it be an occasion of hope, a sign of things to come, a fruitful response to God's will and to the prayer of our Lord that 'they may all be one so that the world may believe'. (John 17:21).

—CCAN

ECUMENICAL YOUTH VISITORS TO CHINA

The following was issued by a 10-person delegation of youth leaders from the Christian Conference of Asia (youth department), World Student Christian Federation (Asia-Pacific region), YMCA (Asia alliance), Hong Kong Christian Council (youth department), World Council of Churches (youth sub-unit), and Tao Fong Shan Ecumenical Centre, Hong Kong following their visit (17 May-1 June) to Churches and Chinese youth in four cities (Nanjing, Shanghai, Fuzhou, Guangzhou). The visit was organized in co-operation with the China Christian Council and the Three Self Patriotic Movement.

A close relationship of increasing solidarity and trust has been built during our two intensive weeks with Chinese Christians. We have been warmly welcomed by a church which seeks, as we do, to stand with the people in their struggles for justice and a transformed society. Affirmation of our common faith is a firm foundation on which to build our continuing relationship.

Our purpose in visiting China was to gain firsthand understanding of the re-emerging church and to establish a long-term relationship between Christian youth in China and other Asian youth. It is our hope to build up within Asian youth and student movements a leadership which is knowledgeable of the church in China, can offer critical support and can develop a relationship of solidarity on the issues confronting Asian youth. Furthermore, we need again to involve Chinese Christian youth in the Asian ecumenical fellowship as it is not complete without them.

More specifically, we have engaged our Chinese friends, both Christians and others, in a conversation on their understanding of recent Chinese history on the experience and nature of the re-emerging church with its quest for authenticity and theological development, on the present ideological formation of youth and on the implications of China's modernization policies.

In sharing our own experiences from other Asian countries, we have also posed a challenge to Chinese Christian youth to stand in solidarity with Asian peoples' movement struggling for self-determination and against militarization and foreign economic domination.

We have also expressed our uneasiness about China's modernization policies. The general Asian experience of modernization or 'development', of the incursion of transnational corporations, foreign capital and technology is one of a progressive loss of sovereignty and an increasing dependence. While recognizing the strength of Chinese socialism, we expressed our sense of foreboding.

In listening to Christian leaders and Chinese youth, we were aware of our severe limitations understanding this great country and its people. But we are confident that this first step will lead to further contact and a deepening our understanding.

We rejoice with Chinese Christians in their new freedom to live out their faith and to serve all the people of China. Our continuing relationship holds great promise and will enrich the Asian ecumenical fellowship immeasurably.

—EPS

ASIA YOUTH ASSEMBLY

CALL TO ASSEMBLE

The ecumenical youth and student movements of Asia are called to assemble in Delhi, India, September 25 to October 10, 1984.

WE WILL ASSEMBLE with a vision of God's kingdom of justice and peace in Asia.

We will assemble with a purpose of deepening our commitment to organising in solidarity with people's movements.

We will assemble with a hope that, out of suffering and oppression, the people of Asia will rise up to claim their full humanity.

FOR WE WILL GATHER in the midst of ever-increasing economic exploitation and domination of the majority of Asian people.

Those who are crying loudest for peace are denying the people's demands for justice while preparing for war against the poor of all nations;

Those who are shouting the name of development are using it for their own gain while tightening the vice of oppression and poverty;

BUT, ABOVE ALL, WE WILL GATHER in the midst of struggle by the people and from them we will seek to learn.

IN DELHI WE WILL CELEBRATE OUR YOUTH, strengthening each other to resist all forms of social control and political repression;

We will rejoice in our youthfulness and our spirit of freedom;

We will pray for and derive inspiration from youth who are locked in prison or have been killed because of their actions for self-determination and human dignity;

We will reaffirm our faith in the people and in the life of Jesus;

And we will challenge all Asian Christians to do God's will in Asia.

News from Diocese—(Contd. from page 21)

Ernest was a devoted husband and a caring father. In spite of the difficulties of being a missionary parent, with many heavy tasks laid upon him and with the children often far away for long periods at boarding school, Ernest made time to keep abreast of his children's enthusiasms and he shared his own hobbies and interests with them.

Ernest was a catholic Christian in the true sense. He was a member of the World Church. It was therefore entirely fitting that in 1976 he had the opportunity of representing the British and Irish Conferences at the Methodist Conference in Ghana, and in 1981 at the Methodist Conference in Zimbabwe. Also, he and Muriel were both invited as official representatives to Medak in 1979, when the centenary of Methodist work in that part of India was celebrated.

RAYALASEEMA DIOCESE

Mr. C. T. Neal slept in the lord at his son's residence at Bellary on 26-7-1984.

He was the former Principal and Correspondent of Union Mission Training School—Cuddapah and also Maltus Smith Multipurpose School—Gooty.

He was also a member of Meston Training College Committee. He was a member of several committees of the Rayalaseema Diocese.

He served on the Synod Executive Committee for many years. He was in-charge of the hostels and Sunday School work, while at Gooty. —Indumathi Patnaik.

NOTICE

Wanted

The N.M.S. of India needs Evangelists to go different parts of the country and an organizing Secretary for North Tamil Area. Persons who are committed for Evangelism, may apply to the

General Secretary,
National Missionary Society of India,
206, Peters Road,
Royapettah, Madras-600 014.

Book Review.....

A GUIDE TO ESSENTIAL ECUMENICAL READING

By Ans. J. Van der Bent. Published by World Council of Churches, 150, Geneva 44 Pages, Price \$ 2.

Since its beginning in 1948, the World Council of Churches has published a number of books, pamphlets and periodicals on various subjects, such as the history of the ecumenical movement, ecumenical theology, the WCC assemblies, the unity of the church, church and society, mission and evangelism, dialogue with people of giving faiths, inter church aid, health and healing, racism, education, women in church society and communications.

This small book with its fund of information will be very useful to students, pastors, priests, lay persons and staff in various ecumenical organisations, who are interested in such readings.

Following are excerpts from the guide.

A history of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948 deals extensively with various ecumenical trends and activities from the 16th century to the end of the 19th century, the International Missionary Council, the Faith and Order, the International Friendship and the Life and Work movements, the Orthodox churches' and the Roman Catholic Church's attitudes towards the ecumenical movement, various other aspects of the 20th century ecumenical movement and the genesis of the World Council of Churches.

The World Christian Encyclopedia is the most recent and comprehensive reference work on Christian churches and religions in the 20th century. It provides information on religious developments in all countries of the world, lists all Christian denominations and gives comparative statistics of church growth and data on all of the world's great faiths. It includes also various maps, directories, indexes and a who's who in the Christian world.

Some major writings of M.M. Thomas, former moderator of the Central Committee and director emeritus of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore, have been collected in *Towards a Theology of Contemporary Ecumenism*.

The complete record of the Public Hearing on Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament, organised by the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam in 1980, has been published in *Before It's Too Late—The Challenge of Nuclear Disarmament*.

An Orthodox view on nature and science, and on a new style of Christian ethical reflection is given by Paulos Gregorios in *The Human Presence*.

With remarkable clarity and brevity David M. Stowe accomplishes in *When Faith Meets Faith* a critical examination of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, primal nature worship and the worship of the state in fascism, nazism and communism. He calls Christians to a critical commitment to truth and outlines three essential steps for encounter with other faiths.

In *Compassionate and Free*, Marianne Katoppo, from Indonesia, describes the Asian struggle for a full humanity in which women are involved and concerned with moving towards a relevant theology.

Credible Christian Communication, a study resource for local churches, helps Christian communities to face the hard choices for sustaining, regaining, even earning credibility. Their pre-occupation has been more with the techniques of how the church communicates than the far more important question of the substance of what it has to say.

These brief descriptions of the contents will help readers to choose their reading and so the booklet is of value.

Orders may be placed through the Christian Literature Society, Post Box No. 501, Madras-600 003, who are the agents for the World Council of Churches Publication.

—SHANTA KINGSTON.

NOTICES

VACANCY

Appointment to be made latest February 1985 :
TREASURER (Business Manager) with expertise in Financial management and book-keeping some knowledge of legal matters and business administration, working knowledge of Hindi and preferably Marathi also, and genuinely commitment to Christ and his ministry. Apply with biodata, statement of Christian experience, and addresses of three leaders who know you well. Contact :

The Principal,
Union Biblical Seminary,
Bibewewadi,
PUNE-411 037,
Maharashtra.

INAUGURATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INDIAN ASSOCIATION FOR PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING

The Indian Association for Pastoral Care and Counselling was inaugurated by Dr. K. C. Abraham, at the Ecumenical Christian Centre, Whitefield, Bangalore, on April 27, 1984. The Association is committed to enabling the Christian churches to manifest caring and healing in the world. It will seek to create awareness of and promote development of Pastoral care and counselling in India. It will promote education, training, research, and literature in Pastoral care and counselling. The Association will also provide a network of support for its members through newsletters, meetings, workshops and seminars. The Association will seek to promote relationships with Regional and International organizations which hold similar aims and objectives.

The Officers of the Association are : President, Carlos A. Welch, Vice-President, Dr. Salim Shariff and Secretary/Treasurer Dr. D. D. Pitamber. Dr. Victor Paul and Rev. Kambar Manickam were elected as members of the executive.

Dr. D. D. Pitamber,
Secretary/Treasurer,
C/o. United Theological College,
17, Millers Road,
BANGALORE-560 046.

WORLD VISION OF INDIA

World Vision of India is a Christian Humanitarian Organisation with Office at Madras, Pune, Dimapur and Delhi.

Applications are invited from Young Energetic Christian Men and Women for various positions in our Organisation.

Qualification Required :

Applicants should be Graduates or Postgraduates in the field of Social Work, Commerce, Business Administration, Finance, Theology or Agriculture.

They should have a Personal Experience or accepting the Lord Jesus Christ and have a Desire for Evangelism and Community Development.

Working knowledge of English and Respective Regional Language Essential.

Previous Experience will be an added asset.

Job Qualifications :

Applicants should be willing to Work with Urban, Rural or Tribal Communities and Monitor Functioning of Institutional Projects which will Entail Travelling all over India.

Salary Commensurate with Qualifications Experience.

Apply to-

The Executive Director

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Closing Date for Receipt of Applications 30.9.1984

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